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MEDIEVAL ITALY

DURING A THOUSAND YEARS (305–1313)

A BRIEF HISTORICAL NARRATIVE WITH CHAPTERS ON GREAT EPISODES AND PERSONALITIES AND ON SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH RELIGION ART AND LITERATURE

BY H. B. COTTERILL

Author of 'Ancient Greece' Translator of Homer's Odyssey' Editor of 'Selections from the Inferno' etc.

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PREFACE

AS early as the time of Cicero and Varro,' says Gibbon, 'it was the opinion of the Roman augurs that the *twelve vultures* which Romulus had seen represented the *twelve centuries* assigned for the fatal period of his city.' This prophecy, as we learn from writers of the age, such as the poet Claudian, filled men's minds with gloomy apprehensions when the twelfth century of Rome's existence was drawing to its close, and 'even posterity must acknowledge with some surprise that the interpretation of an accidental or fabulous circumstance has been seriously verified by the downfall of the Western Empire.'

The traditional date of the founding of Rome is 753 B.C., and if we hold that its Empire ended with the capture of the city by the Vandal Gaiseric and the death of Valentinian III, the last Emperor of the great Theodosian dynasty, both of which events occurred in A.D. 455, the fulfilment of the prediction will certainly appear surprising. Nor need it wholly shatter our faith in ancient auguries if we feel compelled to defer the date of the final downfall for some twenty-one years, during which brief period no less than nine so-called Emperors assumed the purple : one the assassin of Valentinian, the next the nominee of the Visigoth king at Arles, five others the puppets of the barbarian general Ricimer, another an obscure palace official elected by a Burgundian noble, and the ninth the son of a Pannonian soldier in Attila's army—the 'inoffensive youth,' as Gibbon calls him, who had inherited or assumed the high-sounding names of Romulus Augustus (derisively or pityingly belittled into Momullus Augustulus), and whom in 476 the barbarian Odovacar deposed and with contemptuous

generosity allowed to retire to spacious and luxurious imprisonment in the villa built by Marius and adorned by Lucullus on the heights that overlook the bays of Baiae and Naples.

This date, 476, is generally accepted as that which marks the end of the history of ancient Rome and the beginning of Italian history. Nevertheless the 'Roman' Empire is considered by some writers to have continued its existence under the Eastern Emperors, if not for nigh a thousand years, till the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, anyhow for more than 300 years, until its usurpation by a woman—that inhuman wretch, the pious Irene. This event, according to such writers, justified the Romans in reviving by papal unction the imperial dignity in the person of the Frank monarch Charles the Great. This revived Empire, which went on existing in a fashion till the death of Henry VII in 1313 (when all real connexion with Italy ceased), or lasted even, some would say, till the abdication of Francis II in 1806, was of course a fiction; but the belief in the so-styled 'Holy Roman Empire' was a fact which much influenced medieval history, and therefore cannot be ignored by the historian. However, whatever arguments may be adduced in support of these various views, it is simpler and more reasonable to hold that the ancient Roman Empire—that is, the world-wide Imperium of which Rome herself was the metropolis—if it did not come to an end when Constantine *si fece Greco* and transferred the imperial seat from Rome to Byzantium, or when the last Theodosian Emperor was murdered in Rome shortly before the arrival of the Vandal Gaiseric, did certainly suffer final extinction when, in 476, the barbarian Odovacar deposed the boy-emperor Romulus Augustulus and assumed the powers, if not the title, of a King of Italy.

We may therefore assume that the history of medieval Italy begins from the year 476. After that date Italy was only temporarily and indirectly connected with that Eastern Empire which some would persuade us to call the 'Later Roman' Empire, but which, seeing that 'Constantinopolitan' is a long word, I think we had better call 'Byzantine'—

especially as the word possesses a sufficient flavour of Orientalism to be useful as a distinguishing term in questions of art as well as of history.

It is true that for a certain period this Byzantine Empire did re-establish its sovereignty over Rome (which it regarded as merely a provincial town of its Italian diocese) and over almost the whole of the peninsula, and that for centuries it retained its supremacy in some important Italian cities and districts—the Exarchate and the southern *marina* especially—so that at times we shall be much occupied by the presence of Byzantines in Italy. It is also true that the Byzantine rulers claimed to be, and were often acknowledged to be, 'Roman' Emperors.[1] Moreover, it must be allowed that the history of this so-called Eastern Empire in its later stages—with its Greek, Syrian, Armenian, Macedonian, Latin, Flemish, and French monarchs and dynasties and with its wealthy and luxurious Oriental offshoots known as the 'Empires' of Nicaea and Trebizond—is exceedingly picturesque and interesting.

Nevertheless, seeing that our subject is Italy and not Byzantium, it will be better to assume that the real Roman Empire ended with the deposition of the last successor of Augustus at Rome in 476, and to limit our attention after that date almost wholly to Italy, casting only now and then a glance across the Adriatic.

But, although the history of medieval Italy may be said to begin its main course from this date, I have thought it advisable to go back to the age of Constantine in order to trace from their early origins certain religious, political, artistic, and literary characteristics, as well as to be able to relate more fully and consecutively the story of the barbarian invasions. After this has been done there will remain the still more difficult task of showing how amid all these diverse elements and forces began to work that new spirit which after so many

[1] But the Caroling Louis II had much reason on his side when, in answer to a contemptuous letter of the Byzantine Emperor Basil, he asserted that the Eastern 'Emperors' were no *Imperatores Romanorum*, and justified his own claim to the imperial office (as Charles the Great used to do) by appealing to the case of David.

centuries has in our days at length evolved an Italian nation. My subject, which extends to the first dawn of the new art and literature, covers the space of a thousand years, and it would be a most wearisome and unprofitable task if I were to attempt to crowd my pages with the innumerable persons that move in such rapid succession, and in such intricate and swiftly changing groups, across the ever-varying scenes of these ten centuries. Even in the spacious and luminous narrative of Gibbon the reader who has not ample leisure and rare perseverance must often despair of finding his way amid the labyrinthine mazes of barbarian invasions and religious discords, or of following continuously the drama of the Empire—a drama so complicated that on more than one occasion no less than *six* Emperors appear together on the stage.

With limited space and such a vast amount of detail before him, he who wishes to give something better than a dry catalogue of names and events must devise some method which, while it allows him to present in a connected narrative whatever historical facts may seem essential, will also permit him to treat other matters of importance in a less formal and statistical fashion—to fill in with a free hand, so to speak, the bare historical outline.

The plan that I have adopted is to prefix to each of the five parts into which my subject naturally divides itself a brief account of the political events of the period in question. These summaries, together with various tables and lists, will enable the reader to frame, or perhaps I should say to arrange in chronological order and perspective, the contents of those chapters in which with a freer hand I sketch certain interesting episodes and personalities, endeavouring by means of quotation and description to add a little in the way of local colour and portraiture.

I have thus been able to avoid interrupting my narrative by disquisitions on architecture, literature, and art, and have relegated what I had to say on these subjects to supplementary chapters.

Any fairly full list of the multitudinous writers on the history

the art, and the literature of Italy during the period covered by this volume would need more space than I can spare, and if the titles of their works were added a large number of pages would be required. I shall therefore only mention a few old and recent acquaintances to whom I owe especial thanks, and whom I can recommend for further information. I have not thought it necessary to give any names of the almost innumerable compilers of local handbooks, authoritative or amateur.

Balzani (*Cronache it. del Med. Evo*); Boëthius (*De Cons. Phil.*); Bryce; Capelletti; Cassiodorus (and Jordanes; also his *Letters*, edited by Hodgkin); Compagni (Dino); Crowe and Cavalcaselle; Engel et Serrure (*Numismatique du Moyen Age*); Eusebius; Ferrero; Gaspary (*Scuola Poet. Sicil.*); Gibbon; Gregorovius (*Gesch. Stadt Rom*); Gregory the Great; Hodgkin (*Italy and her Invaders*); Sir T. G. Jackson (*Romanesque Architecture*); Jordanes (*Hist. Goth.*); Kugler; *Liber Pontificalis* (ed. Duchesne); Machiavelli (*Istorie Fior.*); Mothes (*Baukunst d. Mittelalters*); Muratori; Paulus Diaconus (*Hist. Lomb.*); Priscus; Ricci (especially on Ravenna); Rivoira (*Orig. dell' Arch. Lomb.*); Rotari (*Editto*); St. Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*); Sismondi; Symonds; Villani (Giov.); Wroth (*Brit. Mus. Catal. Goth. and Lomb. Coins*).

The *Invasioni barbariche* and *L'Italia da Carlo Magno alla Morte di Arrigo VII* of S.E. Professor Pasquale Villari I have found very pleasant and useful guides through the mazes of political events and biographical details.

My thanks are due to the Delegates of the Oxford Press for allowing me to make use of my little volume of *Selections from Dante's Inferno*, published just forty years ago.

In the List of Illustrations, where the necessary information is given about the pictures, due acknowledgment is made of permission to make use of photographs, etc. Some of the line engravings inserted in the text I copied from my own note-books, some from old books or photographs.

In regard to the coins, it gives me pleasure to repeat here my thanks that are due to Mr. J. Allan, of the British Museum.

MEDIEVAL ITALY

For my first four maps I have accepted in the main the political divisions given in Professor Villari's *Invasioni barbariche*; the fifth is (with permission) founded on a map published by the Cambridge University Press to illustrate the *Cambridge Medieval History*.

Perhaps it may be well to add that I am aware that nobody can express opinions on subjects such as medieval architecture without exposing himself to a *fucilata* from various quarters.

H. B. COTTERILL

ROME, *April* 1915

P.S. A note on the Papal Tiara has been most kindly sent me by Professor Villari. As it has arrived too late to be inserted in the List of Illustrations, I append here a translation of the more important passages:

"The tiara probably came from the East. . . . The Jewish High Priest's tiara had three crowns. . . . It is certain that the *tiara* adopted by the Popes represents the temporal power, whereas the *mitre* represents the spiritual. The rites used in placing the episcopal mitre on a Pope's head and in placing the tiara are different. The tiara (also called the *regnum*) had first one crown, then two, and then three. The tiara with three crowns was called the *triregnum*. The crowns have been said to symbolize the Church militant, tribulant, and triumphant, or the Trinity, or else the three theological virtues; but such interpretations are fantastic. . . . After 1059 the tiara is often mentioned. It may be said to appear [as natural] with the programme of Gregory VII [Hildebrand]. After some years of his pontificate Boniface VIII added a second crow n[evidently after 1299; see explanation of Fig. 50], but it is difficult to say who added the third. Some think it was Urban V [1362, at Avignon], and some fancy that the motive was to imitate the High Priest of the Jews. I have heard of the hypothesis that the first crown symbolized the papal sovranty over the Patrimony of St. Peter, and the other two the sovranty which the Popes pretended to have over the kingdoms of Apulia and Sicily. This hypothesis might have been suggested by the fact that in some of the oldest tiaras with three crowns there is a single crown above, while below the two others are united, the lower being upside down."

Some further details are given by Gregorovius. See vol. i, pp. 812, 829, and vol. ii, pp. 653, 673, of the splendidly illustrated Italian edition of his *History of the City of Rome*. On p. 489 of vol. i will be found a photograph of the statue of Gregory the Great (said to have been begun by Michelangelo) where the tiara has three crowns—which is of course a blunder. Gregorovius says that the original tiara was a conical head-dress made of white peacock feathers.

H. B.-C.

VIAREGGIO, *May* 1915

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The names of those to whom the author is indebted for permission to use copyright photographs are printed in italic.

FIG.

1. DANTE *Frontispiece*

Bronze bust. Naples, Museo Nazionale. The face perhaps copied from the Bargello mask, which is said to have been taken after death. In any case a very fine work and a most satisfactory representation of what one hopes the poet of the *Divina Commedia* looked like. The much-restored Bargello fresco, originally perhaps by Giotto, presents rather the lover of Beatrice and the writer of the *Vita Nuova*. *Photo Brogi.*

2. BATTLE AT SAXA RUBRA 4

Part of the Arch of Constantine, Rome. The central rude and grotesque relief, dating from about 312, represents the battle at Saxa Rubra, near the Milvian Bridge, where Maxentius was drowned. See pp. 3, 40. Note above the much finer sculptures of the age of Trajan and the Antonines. See p. 260. In a *Stanza* of the

FIG. PAGE

Vatican there is a celebrated fresco of the same scene, designed by Raffael and painted by Giulio Romano. *Photo Anderson.*

3. BUSTS OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT AND JULIAN 50

Uffizi, Florence, and Capitol Museum, Rome. For Constantine's curls and finery, see p. 51 *n.* The Julian bust is doubtful, the inscription being medieval. *Photos Brogi.*

4. S. PAOLO FUORI LE MURA, ROME 58

Founded in 388 by Theodosius and Valentinian II. (See p. 58 and under 'Churches' in Index.) Burnt down, except the choir and apse, in 1823. The reconstruction (1824–54) on the old lines is very impressive, and the more modern character of some of the alterations does not prevent the edifice from being one of the grandest basilicas in existence. *Photo Alinari.*

5. S. MARIA MAGGIORE, ROME 68

See p. 67 *n.* and Index under 'Churches.' *Photo Anderson.*

6. PULPIT, S. AMBROGIO, MILAN 80

With the so-called tomb of Stilicho. As he was killed at Ravenna (p. 80) it is unlikely that he was buried here. The sarcophagus dates probably from about 500. The ancient Lombard pulpit was removed about 1150, during restorations, and re-erected in later Romanesque style, etc., about 1200. Some of the quaint reliefs may date from 800, or even 500. *Photo Alinari.*

7. MAUSOLEUM OF GALLA PLACIDIA, RAVENNA 90

See pp. 91, 260, 271. The middle sarcophagus is that of the Empress. Those to right and left (the latter invisible) are supposed to be the tombs of her husband, Constantius III, and her son, Valentinian III. *Photo Alinari.*

8. POPE LEO AND ATTILA 102

Fresco by Raffael in one of the *Stanze* of the Vatican. See p. 102. Raffael transfers the scene to the vicinity of Rome (Colosseum in background) and gives Leo I the features of Leo X (*cf.* Fig. 29). For Attila's personal appearance, see p. 96. Note that SS. Peter and Paul are seen only by the Huns. In St. Peter's, over the altar of Leo I, there is a theatrical relief by Algardi (*c.* 1650) representing the same scene. *Reproduction, with permission, of a heliotype in the 'Rafael-werk,' published by E. Arnold (Gutbier), Dresden.*

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See pp. 80 *n.*, 92, and 271. The dome, as that of S. Vitale, is formed of terra-cotta vessels. See p. 267. *Photo Alinari.*

11. MAUSOLEUM OF THEODERIC, RAVENNA 164

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12. S. APOLLINARE NUOVO, RAVENNA 168

See descriptions, pp. 168 *sq.*, 272. *Photo Alinari.*

13. S. PIETRO IN CIEL D'ORO, PAVIA 176

See under 'Churches' in Index. The church was (if not still older) originally Lombardic, founded perhaps by Agilulf, *c.* 604; but it was rebuilt in Romanesque style. The main portion of the portal dates (says Mothes) from 950 to 1000. For the tomb of Boëthius see p. 177, and for that of St. Augustine see description of Fig. 52 (1). Coronations of the Kings of Italy (see under Fig. 19) were sometimes held at Pavia, the old Lombard capital, in S. Pietro, or else in S. Michele, which was then the cathedral. *Photo Alinari.*

14. BOËTHIUS 178

See p. 175 *sq.* The painting (imaginary or from some old portrait?) is by Giovanni Santi, Raffael's father. It is in the Barberini Gallery, Rome. *Photo Brogi.*

15. MONASTERO DEL SACRO SPECO, SUBIACO 188

See p. 188. The church and monastery, as also the Abbey Church of Monte Cassino and the Collemaggio at Aquila (Fig. 49), are said to have suffered from the recent terrible earthquake (January 13, 1915). *Photo Brogi.*

16. S. VITALE, RAVENNA 198

See under 'Churches' in Index. *Cf.* Fig. 23. *Photo Alinari.*

17. MOSAICS OF JUSTINIAN AND THEODORA, RAVENNA 202

See pp. 203–4, 272. *Photo Alinari.*

18. S. APOLLINARE IN CLASSE, RAVENNA 204

See under 'Churches' in Index. For the mosaics, see p. 273. *Photo Alinari.*

FIG. PAGE

19. (1) THE IRON CROWN 228

Preserved in the Treasury of Monza Cathedral (p. 256 *n.*). With this the Lombard kings, it is said, were crowned at Pavia, their capital, or Milan (*e.g.* Agilulf), or perhaps Monza. The Frank and German monarchs until Henry II (1002) seem to have been crowned, as Kings of Italy, generally at Pavia, but later at Milan. The 'Italian' king Berengar II (*c.* 950) was crowned at Pavia. Frederick Barbarossa, at feud with Milan, was crowned at Monza, or perhaps at Pavia (*c.* 1155), which city took his part. Since then the Iron Crown has been preserved at Monza. It was used by Charles V, who crowned himself with it at Bologna in 1530, and by Napoleon (at Milan) in 1805. In 1859 it was carried off by the Austrians, but was restored in 1866. Perhaps the original was a simple iron crown, or possibly only the interior circlet of iron (visible in the picture) which tradition asserted to have been formed of one of the nails of the Cross, brought by Helena from Jerusalem (p. 39). The golden, jewelled exterior dates perhaps from about 1100. It is a simpler and apparently later work than the imperial crown figured below. Muratori repudiates the nail legend. Bonincontro, a Monza chronicler of the fourteenth century, does not mention the legend, though he speaks of the iron crown and tells us that iron is a strong and regal metal. Numerous nails from the Cross were supposed to exist. See p. 43. The legend, if it was not originated, was certainly confirmed by the fact that Matteo Villani (*c.* 1350) called this crown *Sda Corona*, which was wrongly explained as *Sancta Corona*, whereas it meant *Seconda Corona*—the first crown being the silver one at Aachen and the third being the golden one at Rome. *Photo G. Bianchi, Monza.*

(2) THE SO-CALLED CROWN OF CHARLEMAGNE 228

This magnificent crown, surmounted by a cross and arched diadem, is in the Imperial Treasury at Vienna (in the Hofburg), the Keeper of which was good enough to give me permission to use the photograph. There is great divergence of opinion as to its date. Some authorities, as Bock—with whom I agree—believe the crown itself to be early Italian work, and the diadem with the name 'Conrad' to have been a later addition. In this case there is just a possibility that the crown is actually that which was used by Leo III to crown Charles the Great. But some patriotic Teutons, such as v. Falke, who has written a richly illustrated monograph on the subject, assert that both parts were undoubtedly made in Germany, and they insist that the whole *cannot* be

FIG. PAGE

anything but eleventh-century work, and therefore *must* be an imperial diadem made specially (at Mainz ?) for the coronation of Conrad II and his consort Gisela in 1027 (see p. 348). There exists also—found in excavating a street in Mainz not very long ago—a collection of beautiful brooches, spangles, earrings, necklaces, etc., which are of work very similar to the arched diadem, and which may very probably have been the coronation finery of Gisela. She was a very energetic and ambitious lady. She was descended through her mother from Charles the Great, and, after having had two husbands, married Conrad when he was only a Count. She was not content till she had got him and herself crowned with the imperial diadem at Rome—an occasion on which much bloodshed was caused, as so often, by quarrels between Germans and Romans, and also by the jealousies of the rival archbishops of Ravenna and Milan. The arched diadem bears, worked in pearls, the words, *Chuonradus Dei gratia Imperator Augustus*. The crown itself is a mass of precious stones, gold filigree, and pearls. It has three pictures in enamel representing (1) Christ, between two archangels, as King of Kings; (2) David as the King of Manly Courage; (3) Solomon as the King of Justice and Wisdom; (4) Hezekiah as the King of Piety. *Photo by S. Schramm, Vienna, photographer to the Court of Rumania.*

20. THEODELINDA'S HEN AND CHICKENS 254

See footnote, p. 256. They perhaps represent the Lombard kingdom and its seven provinces. They are silver-gilt. The copper disk on which they stand is modern. *Photo G. Bianchi, Monza.*

21. (1) S. MARIA IN COSMEDIN, ROME 258

Close to the Tiber and the Round Temple (formerly 'Temple of Vesta'). Built *c.* 775. Small, but interiorly very beautiful in its proportions. The bell-tower (eighth century) is a good example of a Roman campanile. See Index under 'Campanile.' *Photo Anderson.*

(2) THE PHOCAS COLUMN, ROME 258

In the Forum. For centuries 'The nameless column with a buried base.' Excavated, with the help of English money, soon after Byron wrote that line. The inscription shows that the column (taken from some ancient building) was erected in 608 by the Exarch Smaragdus in honour of the odious tyrant Phocas, of Constantinople, whose gilt statue stood on its summit. See pp. 67 *n.*, 220 258. *Photo Anderson.*

FIG. PAGE

22. S. CLEMENTE, ROME 262

The upper church. See under 'Churches' in Index. *Photo Alinari.*

23. S. VITALE, RAVENNA 266

See under 'Churches' in Index. *Cf.* Fig. 16. *Photo Alinari.*

24. MOSAICS IN S. PUDENZIANA AND S. PRASSEDE, ROME 270

See description, p. 269, and p. 525. The two saints were daughters of Pudens, the host of St. Peter in Rome, and the first-named church is, tradition says, built on the site of the house where the apostle lodged. In the lower picture note that Pope Paschal (817–24), who holds a model of his church, has the *square* nimbus, which shows that he was still living when the mosaic was made. Note also on the palm-tree a phoenix with a radiate nimbus. *Photos Alinari.*

25. S. PIETRO, TOSCANELLA 276

See p. 280 and under 'Churches' in Index. *Photo Anderson.*

26. S. MARIA MAGGIORE, TOSCANELLA 280

As Fig. 25. *Photo Anderson.*

27. CATHEDRAL AND S. FOSCA, TORCELLO 284

See p. 283 and under 'Churches' in Index. For the marble seat in the foreground ('the chair of Attila') see p. 286 *n.* *Photo Andrson.*

28. CATHEDRAL OF GRADO 288

See pp. 101, 285. Grado and Aquileia, both ancient Italian towns and intimately connected with Italian history, have been for more than a century appropriated by Austria. They will doubtless ere long be restored to their *mater antiqua.* In 568, when the Lombards came streaming down over the Venetian Alps, the citizens of Aquileia (rebuilt after its destruction by Attila in 452) fled once more for refuge to Grado. The Patriarch, Paulinus, brought with him all the relics and treasures of the Aquileian churches, and his successor, Elias, obtained the title of Patriarch of Grado. Patriarch Elias (*c.* 578) built the present Cathedral of Grado, doubtless on the site of a more ancient church, taking for his model the basilicas of S. Apollinare in Ravenna. The columns and mosaic floor are evidently from the older church (Byzantine-Ostrogothic). Note the (further) pulpit, with curious reliefs (Ostrogothic? Lombard?) of the evangelistic beasts, and surmounted by a Venetian (Byzantine) canopy. Note also the silver *pala* of the altar, and the (thirteenth-century?) frescos in the apse. Built on to the church there is an ancient baptistery, which has stone

FIG. PAGE

shutters, as at Torcello. The church has been often restored, and probably under the plaster of the triforium might be found mosaics or frescos. In this church is sung the old medieval liturgy of the Grado patriarchate, the *Cantus patriarchinus*. *Photo Alinari.*

29. THE DONATION OF CONSTANTINE TO SILVESTER 304

In the Vatican *Stanze*. By Raffaello da Colle, designed probably by Raffael. Silvester has the features of Clement VII. Among the spectators are depicted Raffael's friend Castiglione and his pupil Giulio Romano. The scene takes place in the old basilica of St. Peter. *Reproduction, with permission, from 'Rafael-werk,' published by E. Arnold (Gutbier), Dresden.*

30. S. MINIATO, FLORENCE 344

See p. 442 and Index. *Photo Brogi.*

31. TOMB OF BEATRICE, MOTHER OF COUNTESS MATILDA, CAMPO SANTO, PISA 348

Interesting firstly on account of the famous Countess Matilda, whose mother Beatrice was the wife of Boniface, Marquess of Tuscany (pp. 349, 353, 430; and note that the predecessor of Boniface was the Marquess, or Margrave, Ugo, called by Dante *il gran barone*, whose tomb is well known to visitors of the Florentine Badia, and whose mother, Willa, founded the original Badia). Boniface died in 1052, and Beatrice, who had married Godfrey of Lorraine, was captured by Henry and, together with her daughter Matilda, taken to Germany, but they were released in 1056, and it was not till the year before the scene at Canossa (viz. 1076, as stated on the tomb) that Beatrice died and Matilda succeeded. Some state that her body was first deposited in this ancient (late Roman) sarcophagus in 1116. The hexameter means 'Although a sinner I was called Lady Beatrix [*i.e.* blest, or sainted].' The following words one expects vainly to make a pentameter, such as *In tumulo jaceo quae comitissa fui*. They mean 'Placed in a tomb I lie, who [was] a countess.' The pentameter was perhaps spoilt by an illiterate stone-cutter in order to insert a rime. He should have also altered *it* to *In tumulum missa* . . . As for the connexion of the relief with Niccolò Pisano, see p. 533. *Photo Alinari.*

32. BAPTISTERY PORTAL, VOLTERRA 372

The octagonal Baptistery dates originally perhaps from the seventh century. The finely proportioned and simply decorated portal is a good example of Tuscan Romanesque quite untouched by the Pisan style (as are also the richer façades of the Toscanella churches, Figs. 25, 26). *Photo Brogi.*

FIG. PAGE

33. CAPPELLA PALATINA, PALERMO 400

'Palace Chapel,' attached to the royal palace of the Norman kings at Palermo. The style is Norman influenced by Saracen architecture. Built about 1130 by King Roger. The walls, arches, and apse are richly covered with very fine mosaics of the Norman-Sicilian school (see pp. 446–448). Note the slightly pointed arches, showing (as at Monreale) what may be Arab influence. See Fig. 43. *Photo Alinari.*

34. ROGER OF SICILY CROWNED BY THE SAVIOUR 406

Mosaic in La Martorana, Palermo. See pp. 407, 448. *Photo Brogi.*

35. KING ROGER'S TOMB 408

In the Cathedral of Palermo. In other porphyry sarcophagi are buried here Frederick II (Fig. 47), his father, Henry VI, his mother, the Empress Constance (Roger's daughter), and in an old Roman sarcophagus lies Frederick's wife, Constance of Aragon. About 1780 the sarcophagi were brought from a side chapel and, after being opened and examined, were placed under these *baldachini*. *Photo Alinari.*

36. PALERMO CATHEDRAL 412

Originally built, in the place of an ancient church that had been turned into a mosque, by Archbishop Offamilio (Walter Of a Mill). This south side of the cathedral and the east front date mainly from about 1170–1200, and show many interesting evidences of Saracen influence. (The gable over the beautiful south porch is a fifteenth-century addition and the very disfiguring dome dates from 1800.) The west front is later (*c.* 1350). It is attached to a vast ancient campanile (the upper part restored) by an arch that spans the street. *Photo Alinari.*

37. S. MARCO, VENICE 422

See under 'Churches' in Index. *Photo Brogi.*

38. THE BAPTISTERY, FLORENCE 428

See p. 78. *Photo Brogi.*

39. FERRARA CATHEDRAL 438

Might perhaps have been better reserved as an example of transition from Romanesque to Gothic. The lower part dates from about 1130, and not only the lowest arcade and the doors but also the main features of the whole building are Romanesque. They are however curiously Gothicized, and the general result is not very satisfactory, though the building is impressive. The

FIG. PAGE

protruding porch is a later addition, partly in Romanesque style, with lions, and partly in a kind of Venetian Gothic. *Photo Alinari.*

40. BAPTISTERY, CATHEDRAL, AND CAMPANILE, PISA 440

See p. 441 and under 'Churches' in Index. *Photo Brogi.*

41. S. MARTINO (CATHEDRAL), LUCCA 442

See pp. 280 and 442. Also for Guidetto's equestrian statue of St. Martin and the Pisani's *Deposition* (neither easily recognizable in the picture) see pp. 532 and 536. The bell-tower is a fine specimen of Lombard campanile. Note the crenate Ghibelline *merli*. *Photo Alinari.*

42. LA COLLEGIATA, S. GIMIGNANO 444

See p. 443. *Cf.* also Fig. 54. The church is richly adorned with frescos by Benozzo Gozzŏli (pupil of Fra Angelico), Ghirlandajo, and others, and contains an altar dedicated to S. Fina, the girl patron saint of the town, by Benedetto da Maiano. *Photo Brogi.*

43. CATHEDRAL OF MONREALE, NEAR PALERMO 446

Built by William the Good, *c.* 1175–89. Its fine towers and other features seem to denote influence of Northern, perhaps English, Norman. See p. 445. The beautiful curves of the slightly pointed arches may denote Saracen influence. Magnificent mosaics cover the walls and apse. See p. 448. *Photo Alinari.*

44. CATHEDRAL OF CEFALÙ 448

For its resemblance to St.-Étienne, Caen, see p. 445 *n.* For the splendid mosaics see p. 448, and note the crenate antipapal battlements of the tower. *Photo Alinari.*

45. COINS, PLATE II: HERACLIUS TO HENRY VII (*c.* 650 TO 1313) 450

See Notes, p. 449.

46. CASTEL DEL MONTE 460

In Apulia, some fifteen miles inland from Trani, on the Adriatic. Built in 1228 by Frederick II and much used by him for hunting purposes. (He is said to have written here his book on falconry, the MS. of which is in the Vatican.) At another such Apulian castle, that of Fiorentino, near Lucera, he died. *Photo Alinari.*

47. TOMB OF FREDERICK II, PALERMO CATHEDRAL 466

See note on Fig. 35. When the sarcophagus was opened the Emperor's body was found swathed in Saracen robes; a crown was on its head; his sceptre and a sword lay by its side. *Photo Alinari.*

FIG. PAGE

48. CHARLES OF ANJOU 476

In the Capitol Museum, Rome (badly placed and lighted). Probably erected by the Romans after the dastardly execution of the youthful Conradin in 1268, when Charles, who is here robed in a Roman toga and is furnished with crown and sceptre, was re-elected Senator of Rome. The face is repellently coarse and cruel and 'the nose is very large,' as Gregorovius remarks—quite rightly, seeing that Dante himself, who met Charles in a pleasant glade of Antipurgatory (instead of in Hell, where he should surely have been!), mentions his *maschio naso*, and calls him *nasuto*. This feature, I think, Dante may have noticed in this very statue when he was at Rome in 1300 and 1301; and, perhaps in Dante's company, Giovanni Villani may have noticed it too, for he describes Charles as 'having a fierce countenance and olive complexion and a large nose.' See p. 476 *n.* The big nose is also visible on Charles's coins. See Plate II, coin 10 (p. 450), where the face has a decided resemblance to that of the statue. *Photo Brogi.*

49. S. MARIA DI COLLEMAGGIO, AQUILA 482

Aquila is in the Abruzzi. This church is interesting in connexion with the story of the poor old hermit-Pope, Celestine V, whose tomb one may see here, as well as frescos, by a pupil of Rubens, depicting his miracles. See p. 481 *n.* The architecture is also very interesting, being a specimen of Southern, probably twelfth-century, Lombard Romanesque, with fine rose-windows, but with an inlaid marble façade which shows decided Saracen influence. It suffered seriously from the terrible earthquake of January 13 this year. It is said to be *fortemente lezionata e pericolante*, and is being propped to prevent collapse. *Photo Anderson.*

50. (1) BONIFACE VIII PROCLAIMING THE JUBILEE OF 1300 486

A fragment of a fresco by Giotto suspended on a pier of the nave in the Lateran Basilica, Rome. It proves that Giotto remained at Rome until at least shortly before 1300. See p. 525. It also proves that at this date Boniface had not assumed the *second* coronet, which is seen in the Statue (and also may be seen on the half-length figure in the *Grotte* of St. Peter's). The original papal head-dress (tiara) was simply a high conical cap of cloth of gold, copied probably from the Phrygian *κυρβασία*, or the *apices* of Roman flamens. The first coronet was perhaps adopted by Bishop Silvester on the strength of the gift of Constantine. (In the fabricated 'Donation' the word *frigium*, *i.e.* Phrygian cap,

FIG. PAGE

is used.) Why Boniface assumed the second is unknown; but I think it may have intimated suzerainty over Sicily and Apulia (see p. 483), at which he was for ever aiming. The *third* coronet of the 'triple-tyrant,' as Milton calls the Pope of Rome, was adopted, it is thought, by the Avignon Pope Urban V—but on what grounds is unknown. *Photo Alinari.*

(2) THE STATUE OF BONIFACE VIII 486

Once adorned the façade, but is now inside the Duomo, at Florence, where it seems to glare angrily round a huge pier towards the portrait of Dante, who is depicted amid scenes of that Inferno to which he condemned his great enemy. *Photo Alinari.*

51. TOMB OF HENRY OF LUXEMBURG 492

In the Campo Santo, Pisa. By a Sienese sculptor, *c.* 1315. *Photo Brogi.*

52. (1) TOMB OF ST. AUGUSTINE 504

In S. Pietro in Ciel d'oro, Pavia. See Fig. 13 and pp. 231 and 280. The body was rescued from the Saracens, and brought from Sardinia by Liutprand, *c.* 723, and was deposited in the ancient *Lombard* church, built by Agilulf. The present tomb, profusely ornamented with reliefs and statuettes, was made about the year 1370. When the church was turned for a time into a storehouse (1844–75) the tomb was taken to the cathedral, and the bones were transferred to a glass coffin. *Photo Alinari.*

(2) TOMB OF ST. DOMENIC 504

In S. Domenico, Bologna. Said by Vasari to be early work (1231 !) of Niccolò Pisano, completed by his pupil, Fra Guglielmo; but probably executed entirely by the pupil about 1267. Having received no pay, it is said, the friar stole a rib of the saint. One of the kneeling angels is said to be an early work of Michelangelo. *Photo Alinari.*

53. ASSISI 508

Monastery and upper church (*c.* 1250) from the west. The monastery is secularized and used as a seminary. *Photo Anderson.*

54. S. GIMIGNANO 516

Photo Brogi.

55. S. ZENO (MAGGIORE), VERONA 520

A very fine Romanesque basilica dating from the eleventh century (choir from *c.* 1260). The castellated building

FIG. PAGE

(with the crenate Ghibelline *merli*) is sometimes used by Emperors on their visits to Italy. *Photo Alinari.*

56. PALACES LOREDAN AND FARSETTI, VENICE 522

Both Venetian Romanesque of about 1150, and of exquisite proportions. The Loredan (to the left) Ruskin calls the most beautiful of all the palaces on the Grand Canal. *Photo Anderson.*

57. (1) MOSAIC IN S. MARIA IN TRASTEVERE 524

For the upper part (*c.* 1140), see p. 525, and for the general character of such mosaics, p. 270. *Photo Alinari.*

(2) LA NAVICELLA 524

In the vestibule of St. Peter's, Rome. By Giotto, or after his design, possibly by Cavallini. See p. 525. The upper part especially has been considerably altered in order to accommodate the mosaic to its present site. Originally it was in the *atrium* of the old basilica. *Photo Alinari.*

58. PULPIT AT LA TRINITÀ DELLA CAVA, NEAR SALERNO 526

Both the pulpit and the spiral column for the Easter candle are very beautiful specimens of South Italian 'Cosmati' work (*c.* 1250). *Photo Brogi.*

59. COSMATI TOMB IN S. MARIA SOPRA MINERVA, ROME 528

See p. 527. *Photo Alinari.*

60. S. CROCE, FLORENCE 530

See pp. 529–30. *Photo Alinari.*

61. THE BAPTISTERY PULPIT, PISA 532

By Niccolò Pisano. See pp. 532 *sq.* *Photo Brogi.*

62. THE RAVELLO PULPIT 534

See p. 535. Ravello is not far from Amalfi. *Photo Brogi.*

63. THE SIENA PULPIT 536

See p. 536. *Photo Alinari.*

64. PALAZZO PUBBLICO, SIENA 544

One of the finest of Italian Gothic palaces. See p. 532. The campanile, some 335 feet high, called *La Torre del Mangia*, was built *c.* 1330–40; the palace itself between 1289 and 1305. Siena became Guelf in 1270 (see p. 517), consequently we have the *square* Guelf *merli*, which should be compared with the crenate *merli* in Figs. 41 and 55. In the Florentine Palazzo Vecchio the main

FIG. PAGE

building (*c.* 1300) has the square, and the tower (*c.* 1460) has the crenate, battlements. *Photo Brogi.*

65. SIENA CATHEDRAL 548

See p. 529. *Photo Brogi.*

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'CONFESSIO' IN THE ORATORY OF S. ALESSANDRO'S CATACOMB, ROME 301

COIN OF MICHAEL PALAEOLOGUS 309

He is kneeling before Christ, supported by the Archangel Michael. On *rev.* the Virgin surrounded by the ramparts of Constantinople. Pachymerus, a contemporary historian, says Michael Palaeologus coined debased gold money, to meet great demands, with 'an image of the city' on the reverse.

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VENETIAN COIN OF *c.* 860 419

Venice now being nearly independent, we have 'God Save the Roman Empire' and 'Save Venice' instead of the name of the Emperor. The building is the 'Carolingian Temple,' found often on coins of this period. After 1100 all reference to the Empire is omitted, and after 1155 the name of the Doge is inserted on the silver *grossi* and *matapans*. Giov. Dandolo first coined the gold ducat and sequin, *c.* 1285. See Plate II, coin 14 (p. 450).

FLORENTINE COIN OF *c.* 1200 432

Silver *grosso*. The same type was kept for the gold florin. See Plate II, coin 16 (p. 450).

COIN OF THE SONS OF UGOLINO, *c.* 1290 516

Ugolino was *bailli* in Sardinia, where his sons, Guelfo and Lotto, minted these coins with the family (Gherardesca) arms.

COIN OF MILAN, *c.* 1260 519

Type of the Milanese gold florin, with St. Ambrose and the two Milanese saints, Protasius and Gervasius. Minted probably by one of the Torriani or Visconti.

The dioceses of the Praefecturae were as follows: PRAEFECTURA GALLIARUM: *Britannia, Galliae, Viennensis.* PRAEFECTURA ITALIAE: *Italia, Hispania, Africa.* (*Spain is sometimes said to belong to the Prefecture of the Galliae.*) PRAEFECTURA ILLYRICI: *Thracia and all Greece, Moesiae, Pannoniae.* PRAEFECTURA ORIENTIS: *Asia, Pontus, the Orient, and Egypt*—'*Asia*' *being western Asia Minor and the* '*Orient*' *being Syria, Palestine, etc.*

PART I

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

305–476

IN 305 Diocletian abdicated and forced Maximian, a Pannonian soldier whom twenty years before he had elected as his imperial colleague (*i.e.* as an 'Augustus'), to do the same. He then left the Empire to Constantius Chlorus and to Galerius, who had been hitherto only 'Caesars,' that is heirs-apparent to the purple. As new 'Caesars' were elected Severus and Maximin.

Constantius in earlier life had married Helena, possibly of British birth, by whom he had a son, afterwards Constantine the Great. When elected a Caesar (293) he had been compelled to put aside Helena and to marry Theodora, daughter of the Emperor Maximian; and the young Constantine, probably feeling humiliated, had preferred to serve as soldier in the far East instead of remaining with his father, who was in command of Gaul and Britain. But fifteen months after his election as Emperor of the West Constantius died at York, and his son Constantine, who had travelled in great haste from Nicomedia in Bithynia to join his father on his expedition against the Caledonians, was saluted by the army at York as Augustus and Imperator.

Galerius had fancied that he would become sole Emperor on the death of Constantius, but when Constantine sent him notice of his election he was obliged to dissemble his rage and grudgingly allowed him the title of Caesar, while he advanced Severus to the dignity of an Augustus and assigned him the province of Italy.

But Maxentius, son of old Maximian (who with impotent

resentment had been sulking in obscurity since his abdication), now raises the standard of revolt at Rome, and Severus takes flight to Ravenna, where he capitulates and is forced to put himself to death. Old Maximian visits Constantine in Gaul in order to explain and negotiate, and takes with him his daughter Fausta, whom Constantine marries, at Arles.[1] In virtue of his former imperial authority Maximian then invests Constantine with the purple, thus giving sanction to his election by the army. Forthwith the Eastern Augustus, Galerius, hearing of the death of Severus, invades Italy, but is obliged to withdraw. He then elects Licinius as an Augustus for the Illyrian province. Hereupon the remaining 'Caesar,' Maximin, demands and is unwillingly granted the imperial title for Egypt and Syria, while at Rome Maxentius proclaims himself Emperor of Italy and persuades his father, the aged Maximian, to reassume the purple. Thus we have no less than six Emperors at the same time—a most confusing state of things!

Maxentius and his father now quarrel. The praetorian guard declares for the younger and Maximian retires to Illyricum, and when expelled thence by Galerius makes his way again to Arles, in Southern Gaul, and resigns his purple into the hands of his son-in-law, Constantine. But while Constantine is absent on an expedition in Rhineland, irrepressible ambition incites the old man to seize the treasure at Arles and to persuade certain soldiers to proclaim him once more as Emperor. Constantine comes sweeping with his flotillas down the Saône and Rhone, and Maximian flees to Marseille, hoping to be rescued by the Roman fleet of his son Maxentius; but he is given up by the citizens and put to death by Constantine, Fausta 'sacrificing the sentiments of nature to her conjugal duties' and apparently approving of the death of her father.

Galerius soon afterwards (311) dies in his palace at Nicomedia —eaten of worms, it is said. He seems to have possessed a

[1] He thus marries his stepmother's sister. His first wife, Minervina, seems to have died.

proud and fiery but a manly and enterprising character, and his reign was noted for many works of public utility, amongst which were the drainage of a vast swamp between the Drave and the Danube and the clearance of wide extents of forest-land.

There are now only four Emperors: Maximin in Asia and Egypt, Licinius in East Europe, Constantine in the West, while Maxentius plays the tyrant in Italy and North Africa.

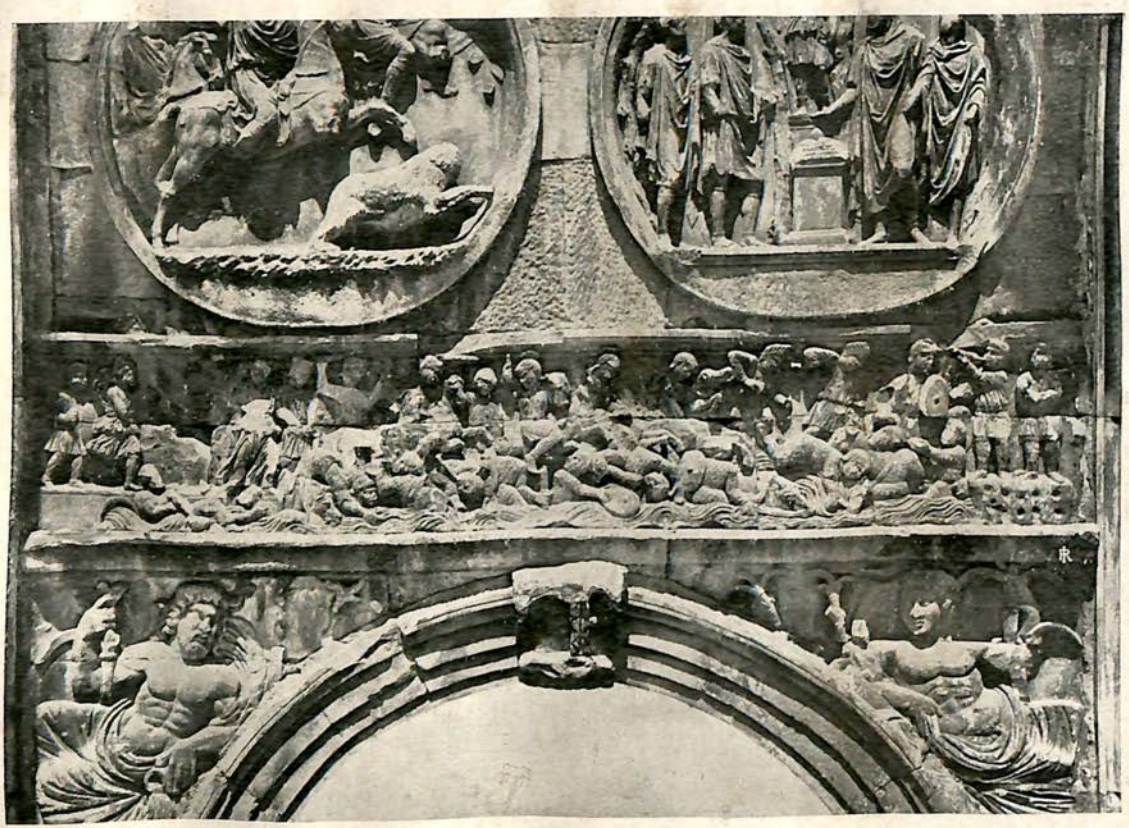
But Italy and North Africa are too small an Empire for the ambition of Maxentius. He openly avows his intention of invading the dominions of Constantine, whose imperial titles he commands to be erased and whose statues he causes to be ignominiously overthrown. Whereupon Constantine, leaving half his army on the Rhine, with some 40,000 men to oppose 200,000, marches southwards and, having crossed Mont Cenis, takes Susa, Turin, Milan, and Verona, and with an eagle-like rapidity, such as that of the great Caesar himself, is ere long in the neighbourhood of Rome, where, at the battle of Saxa Rubra (the Red Rocks, near the Milvian Bridge), Maxentius is defeated, and is drowned in the Tiber (312).

In 313 Constantine's 'Edict of Milan' secured the so-called 'Peace of the Church' and the recognition, at least in the Western Empire, of Christianity as a legal religion—possibly as the State religion, though Constantine himself remained a pagan, or unbaptized, until shortly before his death. In the same year Maximin (Nicomedia) makes war on Licinius (Byzantium and Illyricum), but he is defeated and flees to Tarsus, where he dies. Thus there are now only two Emperors, Constantine and Licinius, who for ten years (314–24) divide the Roman Empire. They quarrel and are reconciled and again quarrel. Constantine then captures Byzantium and shortly afterwards puts Licinius (his brother-in-law) to death, though on the supplication of his own sister he had promised to spare the life of her husband, 'after compelling him to lay himself and his purple at the feet of his *lord and master* and raising him from the ground with insulting pity' (Gibbon). So the Roman world is at last once more for a time united under a single Emperor.

During the next six years Constantine plans and effects the transference of the seat of Empire from Rome to Byzantium, which he furnishes with new walls and public buildings. It is dedicated in 330 under its new name of Constantinopolis. It was during this period—a year after his capture of Byzantium and his murder of Licinius—that he summoned the famous Council at Bithynian Nicaea, where the Nicene Creed was composed and the doctrines of Arius were condemned. (Constantine, by the way, though legend and art picture his baptism by Bishop Silvester at Rome in 324, was first baptized on his death-bed by an Arian bishop.) Shortly after thus laying a foundation-stone of orthodoxy he puts to death his eldest son Crispus and his own wife Fausta (the story reminds one of Hippolytus and of Don Carlos), and his nephew, the young Licinius. Towards the end of his reign Constantine leads a campaign against the Goths, who are now beginning to drive the Scythian inhabitants of Central Europe, known in that age as 'Sarmatians,' across the Danube. He defeats the Goths in a great battle, but the Sarmatians (ancestors of the Bulgarians) are finally forced south of the Danube, and about 300,000 are given territory in Thrace, Macedonia, and Italy.

In 337 Constantine the Great dies at his palace near Nicomedia (Bithynia), and the Empire is divided among his three sons—twenty-one, twenty, and seventeen years of age—Constantine II, Constantius II, and Constans. Of these the first (Emperor of Gaul and Britain and Spain) is killed when invading Italy, the province of his brother Constans; and Constans is murdered by an usurper named Magnentius. Then Constantius, who has massacred a dozen of his own cousins and uncles, hoping thus to extirpate rivals, becomes sole Emperor. He attacks and defeats Magnentius (at Mursa, on the Drave) and chases him from place to place. At last the usurper is overtaken near Lyon and falls on his sword.

Constantius, whose court (at Constantinople, and later at Milan) is dominated by palace officials, especially by an eunuch named Eusebius, adds to his family murders by executing Gallus, his cousin, whom he had married to his sister



2. BATTLE AT SAXA RUBRA
Arch of Constantine

Constantina (a human Fury) and had appointed as Caesar to the province of the far East. The brother of Gallus, the future Emperor Julian (many of whose writings have survived), tells us the shameful story of this tragic event. He too was imprisoned by Constantius, and barely escaped with his life by the favour of the Empress, the beautiful and amiable Eusebia. He is exiled to Athens, but by the influence of Eusebia, is recalled to Milan, and married to Helena, another sister of Constantius, and receives the title of a Caesar and the administration of the West. How strife arises, how Julian is proclaimed Augustus by his soldiers, and how Constantius, hastening from the far East to chastise the usurper, dies near Tarsus, leaving Julian supreme in the Roman world, will be narrated more fully on a later occasion, when the character and reign of the 'Apostate' Emperor will be discussed.

Julian reigned only twenty months and was not yet thirty-two years of age at his death in 363. He died of an arrow wound in Persia, to the east of the Tigris, not far from where Bagdad now stands, at a moment when his army (as in earlier days in these regions the army of the ten thousand Greeks) was in imminent risk of annihilation It is saved by the diplomacy rather than the strategy of Jovian, an officer of the Guard, who (after the honour had been refused by Sallust, the noble-minded Prefect of the eastern provinces) is acclaimed Emperor by the troops and accepts a humiliating peace offered by the Persian king, Sapor, ceding five provinces and many cities. The imperial army, after losing many men in the rivers and deserts of Mesopotamia, reaches Antioch, where, as on all the line of retreat, great indignation is excited by the cession of the eastern provinces. (On Jovian's coins, by the way, his portrait is accompanied by laurel crowns, winged Victories, and prostrate captives !)

During his six weeks' stay at Antioch and his hurried march through Asia Minor towards Constantinople Jovian issues proclamations enjoining toleration towards paganism, but re-establishing Christianity and the 'Peace of the Church'—

re-establishing also the aged Athanasius on the patriarchal throne of Alexandria—an attempt at pacification which, while it brings him enthusiastic acclamation from the Catholic hierarchy, is soon followed by the outbreak of still bitterer fratricidal strife between the Christian sects. At Tarsus the body of the Emperor Julian is buried. Hence Jovian pushes forward, with the Christian standard (the *Labarum*) at the head of his army; but before reaching Nicaea he suddenly dies—poisoned perhaps by mushrooms, or perhaps by the effluvia of charcoal or of a newly plastered room.

In Jovian's stead (after the honour had been once more refused by the Prefect Sallust) is chosen Valentinian, a stalwart officer of Pannonian origin. As he ascends the tribune after investiture a clamour arises that he should elect a colleague. He makes no promise, but a month later, after his arrival at Constantinople, he confers the title of Augustus on his brother Valens, described as a feeble-minded, fat, short man. Thus the Empire is again divided (364), Valens being assigned the East, from the Danube to Persia, and residing chiefly at Antioch, while Valentinian retains Illyricum, Italy, North Gaul, and other western provinces, and chooses Milan as his imperial residence.

In 365–66 takes place the attempt of Procopius, a relative of Julian and a pagan, to make himself master of the Eastern Empire. He captures Constantinople and is acknowledged by troops in Thrace and on the Danube, and his generals subdue Bithynia. The timid Valens, now at Caesarea, wishes to abdicate, but his ministers will not allow it. The aged Sallust is re-elected Prefect of the East, and Procopius, defeated at Thyatira (or in Lycia), escapes to the Phrygian mountains, but is betrayed and beheaded. Thus the cowardly and feeble Valens is re-established on the throne of the Eastern Empire. He devotes most of his energies to persecuting the 'Athanasian Catholics,' being himself an Arian, baptized by the Arian patriarch of Constantinople. The aged Athanasius is, perhaps for the fifth time, forced to fly from Alexandria; but the people take up arms and reinstate their patriarch, who soon afterwards dies (373).

Valentinian, whose person was tall and majestic and who at first gained respect and affection, seems to have passed useful laws—one of which restricted legacies made to the Church, now beginning to indulge in regal wealth and luxury—and to have instituted in many cities educational academies and universities, such as had for centuries existed in Athens. But before he had been long on the throne he appears to have been overmastered by an ungovernable ferocity which demanded many thousands of victims, especially in Rome and in Antioch—the verdicts being generally founded on charges of magic. (He is said to have kept two savage bears, Innocentia and Mica Aurea, to tear to pieces before his eyes those who were condemned.) His choleric temper was the immediate cause of his death, for when (in 375) envoys of the barbarous tribe of Quadi came into his presence in his palace at Trier (Trèves) he addressed them with such passionate violence that he burst a blood-vessel.

Valentinian I was succeeded by his son Gratian, whom he had proclaimed as Augustus when a child of nine, and who was now sixteen years of age. But a part of the army is in favour of his half-brother Valentinian, a mere babe of four, and Gratian good-naturedly accepts him as colleague, under the regency of the child's mother, Justina, assigning him the province of Italy and advising Milan as a residence.

About this time the weak-minded Eastern Emperor, Valens, the uncle of the boy rulers of the West, had allowed a great multitude of Visigoths, driven across the Danube by the Huns, to settle in Moesia and Thrace. These Visigoths, suffering terribly from famine and maltreated and enslaved by imperial officials, revolt and begin to devastate the country; whereupon Valens attacks them. A battle is fought not far from Hadrianople and some 40,000 Imperialists are slain—a disaster that has been compared with that of Cannae. Valens disappeared in the midst of the fray and was never seen again. A vague report asserted that a cottage in which he had taken refuge with his retinue was set on fire by the Goths and that all perished in the flames. Gratian now (378) elects as Emperor of the East

the general Theodosius, of Spanish origin. He himself, a mild and sport-loving youth of nineteen years who had been brought up under the gentle influence of the poet Ausonius, excites the contempt of his army by devoting his time to hunting in his great preserves in Gaul, dressed in Scythian costume and attended by Scythian gillies and favourites. Ere long a revolt is incited in Britain by Maximus, a Roman exile who had married, it is said, a lady of Carnarvon. With a great army—'afterwards remembered [1] as the emigration of a considerable part of the British nation,' says Gibbon—he attacks Gratian, who flees to Lyon and is there taken and slain (383). Maximus proclaims himself Augustus. For four years he is *de facto* the Emperor of the West north of the Alps, and as such is recognized by Theodosius; but ere long he invades Italy, forcing Justina to flee with her son, Valentinian II, now a lad of fifteen, from Milan to Aquileia, and from Aquileia to Constantinople. Theodosius, the Eastern Emperor, receives the fugitives and falls in love with Galla, the sister of the boy-Emperor of the West. After marrying her he carries war into Italy, defeats and slays Maximus, restores Valentinian II to his throne (388), and spends three years in Rome and Milan. It was during this sojourn of his at Milan that Theodosius, who as ardent Catholic and exterminator of Arianism had enjoyed the special favour of St. Ambrose, was (it is said) excluded by the archbishop from the cathedral of Milan until he had publicly done penance for the massacre of the unsuspecting citizens of Thessalonica, which he had allowed to take place on account of a tumult

Some two years later (392), not long after the return of Theodosius to Constantinople, the young Valentinian was murdered at Vienne in Gaul, probably by a Frank general named Arbogast. Thus Theodosius was left the sole legitimate Emperor. Arbogast set himself up as dictator and elected as rival Emperor of the West a rhetorician named Eugenius, and it was two years before Theodosius ventured a campaign against this second usurper, whom with great difficulty and

[1] For the story of St. Ursula in this connexion see Index.

peril he defeated on the Frigidus (Cold River) near Aquileia. Arbogast fell on his own sword, and Theodosius, thus rid of all rivals, was now practically, as well as nominally, the supreme lord of the Roman Empire.

But his life is threatened by dropsy, caused or aggravated by luxurious habits, and having nominated his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius, as his successors, the first in the East and the second in the West, he summons the younger, Honorius, a boy of ten years, to Milan (395) to receive the Western sceptre from his dying hands; and he entrusts the tutorship of the lad to the chief of his army, Stilicho. To Arcadius, a feeble youth of eighteen years and, according to Gibbon, of a malignant and rapacious spirit, was committed the Eastern Empire, and as his guardian or regent was selected by Theodosius the chief minister of State, Rufinus, a Gaul of obscure birth and odious character. This partition of the Empire proved final, except for an interval of two years after the death of Honorius. Henceforth, therefore, Italy alone will occupy most of our attention.

Honorius, who reigned for twenty-eight years, was of such mean intellect, ungovernable temper, and unnatural instincts that he may justly be suspected of insanity. During his reign, however, events took place of supreme importance for the future of Italy.

The chief actor in this scene of the drama is Stilicho, the Vandal general already mentioned, at first the guardian and afterwards the father-in-law of Honorius, and known to literature as the hero of the servile muse of Claudian, the last of the classic Latin poets. In 395 he succeeds in procuring the assassination of his rival Rufinus by means of Gothic troops devoted to his cause, and for about thirteen years he is the real ruler of both Empires.

In 402, after having rescued Honorius, who had abandoned Milan in terror at the invading hosts of Visigoths under Alaric and of Vandals under Radegast, Stilicho persuaded him to transfer the seat of Empire to Ravenna; and this city remained for many years the capital of Italy.

Again and again Stilicho now defeats Alaric—near Turin and then near Verona—and at length (405) captures and kills Radegast, who with a huge army of Vandals and other barbarians from Rhaetia is besieging Florence. But in order to oppose these invaders he withdraws legions from the Rhine, thus letting into Gaul a deluge of savage Vandals and other German tribes, who spread devastation over seventeen provinces. Also from Britain troops are withdrawn, and ere long Roman occupation comes here finally to an end, so that the Britons, thus left to the ravages of the Picts and Scots, begin to call on the 'English' sea-rovers for help—the help that came some forty years later with Hengist and Horsa! But to return: In 407, one of the last years of the Roman occupation, a private soldier, Constantine by name, is elevated by the soldiery in Britain to the dignity of Emperor, and for some time he terrifies Honorius by extending his conquests[1] over Gaul and Spain, 'from the wall of Antoninus to the columns of Hercules.'

The popularity and power of Stilicho suffer eclipse by reason of these occurrences. He is accused of treason, and in 408 at Ravenna, where he had sought sanctuary in a church, he is killed by the orders or the connivance of Honorius. The death of Stilicho opens the floodgates to the Visigoth invaders. Thirty thousand Goths, hitherto in the service of Stilicho and the Empire, join Alaric, who, after seizing the port of Ostia and thrice investing Rome and bringing it to dire extremities by famine, enters it with his army in 410—the first time that the city had been entered by a foreign foe since its capture by the Gauls in 390 B.C. Alaric remained only three days—or perhaps six—in Rome, where the bloodshed and pillage were apparently less than might have been expected. He then marched southward, perhaps intending to invade Sicily, but died at Cosenza and was buried, it is said, beneath the waters of the Busento, whose stream was diverted for a time to allow

[1] A little later there were again *six* nominal Emperors, viz. Honorius, Theodosius II, Constantine and his son Constans, Attalus (Rome), and Maximus (Spain). Some of the usurpers I have omitted from my narrative.

a sepulchre and cairn to be built in the river's bed. The retreat of the Visigoths from Italy under Athaulf (Adolf), the foundation of their great kingdom in South Gaul, and the remarkable fortunes of the princess Galla Placidia, whom Alaric captured in Rome, will be more fully described later (Chapter V).

Here it will suffice to say that this daughter of the Eastern Emperor, Theodosius the Great, is taken to Gaul by Athaulf, who soon after marrying her is murdered. She is ransomed by her half-brother Honorius (for 600,000 measures of corn), and on her return to Italy marries Constantius, a celebrated general, who receives the title of Augustus from Honorius, but soon after dies (421). She then quarrels with Honorius and withdraws with her son Valentinian, scarcely four years of age, to Constantinople. At Constantinople the Emperor was now Theodosius II, her (half-) nephew. He had succeeded Arcadius in 408 when a child of seven years, and had been till now under the regency of his sister, Pulcheria, who long after he came of age, indeed during all his reign (especially after the retirement of his wife, Eudocia, to Palestine), was the real ruler of the Eastern Empire, and after his death in 450 was acknowledged as Empress, but was induced or allowed to take as her imperial consort, nominally her husband, a fine old soldier and senator named Marcian.

But to return to Placidia and her little son: they are kindly received by Pulcheria and Theodosius, and after the death of Honorius a few months later (and a further interval of about two years, during which Theodosius suppresses an usurper, John by name, at Ravenna and thus becomes the sole Emperor) the title of Augustus of the West is given to the child Valentinian, now some six years of age, the regency being confided to his mother. Thus the whole Roman Empire is now practically under the rule of two women, of whom one holds the reins of government for about fifteen years (425–40), and the other (Pulcheria) for about forty.

The long reign of Valentinian III (425–55) is notable for two most important barbarian invasions—that of the Huns and that of the Vandals.

At his, or rather his mother Placidia's, court at Ravenna the rivalry of two distinguished generals, Aëtius and Boniface, greatly influences the course of events.

Boniface, an old and faithful supporter of Placidia in her days of exile, had been made governor of the province of Africa, where he became a great friend of St. Augustine. Aëtius, who had sided with the usurper John, and had even summoned a great army of Huns to support the insurrection, was clever enough to explain matters and gain the favour of Placidia, whose chief adviser he became at the Ravenna court. By the intrigues of Aëtius Boniface was, it seems, summoned home from his command in Africa; but he refused to obey, and it is said—perhaps falsely—that in a fit of indignant anger he invited the Vandals to Africa. In 429 their king Gaiseric (Genseric) crossed from Spain with a large army, and in spite of the desperate resistance of Boniface, who too late had repented of his error (if indeed he had ever committed it), they laid waste the whole of the country and captured Hippo after a long siege—during which siege St. Augustine, who was with Boniface in the beleaguered city, died. Boniface escapes and returns to Ravenna, where he fights a duel (or perhaps a battle) with Aëtius and dies of his wounds in 432. Aëtius is thereupon—some relate—proclaimed a rebel by Placidia He takes refuge with his friends, the Huns, and once more brings a great army of these barbarians to overawe Ravenna. By this means (says Gibbon—though others doubt it) he established himself as a kind of dictator, 'assuming with the title of master of the cavalry and infantry the whole military power of the State.'

Meanwhile Gaiseric and his Vandals waste Africa with fire and sword. In 439 they capture Carthage and soon after attack and overrun Sicily, and Placidia is compelled to sign a treaty conceding them the conquered provinces and thus securing a period of peace. So things continued until 450, when Placidia, who for the last ten years had withdrawn into private life at Ravenna, died—at Rome, though her tomb is at Ravenna.

The period 450–52 is notable for the terror caused by Attila the Hun, the 'Scourge of God,' who like a thunderbolt falls on the Empire of the West, but is defeated, or at least checked, by Aëtius and his Visigoth allies at a great battle near Châlons—a battle that decided the fate of Europe, and is worthy to be remembered with that of Salamis, of Himera, or of Tours. Then Attila, enraged, swoops down upon Italy and captures many towns, among them Padua and Aquileia. (The fugitives from these and other places settle at Grado and on the lagune islands and *lidi* where Venice afterwards arises.) At the south end of Lacus Benácus (Lago di Garda) Attila is now met by an embassy from Rome, led by Pope Leo the Great. What was said, or what happened, to cause such a marvel is unknown, but it is certain that after his interview with Leo the savage Hun monarch withdrew his army; and shortly afterwards he died suddenly—perhaps of haemorrhage.

Valentinian III had promised Aëtius his daughter in marriage, but after Attila's death he becomes more self-reliant, and in a fit of fury, when Aëtius importunately urges his suit, assassinates him. In the following year (455) Valentinian himself, while looking on at athletic games at Rome, is assassinated by two soldiers, in revenge for the murder of Aëtius, or possibly, as we shall see, for another reason. Thus the dynasty of Theodosius is extinguished (for Pulcheria had died two years before at Constantinople), and we might perhaps reasonably regard this year, 455, which also brought ruin and desolation on the city of Rome, as the end of the Western—that is, the ancient—Roman Empire; for, although in the next twenty-one years no less than nine so-called Emperors arose and fell in Rome, they are mere shadows in the great procession of Augustan monarchs—puppets, most of them, of barbarian princes or generals.

Valentinian's assassination was perhaps an act of revenge not only for the murder of Aëtius but also for insult offered by the Emperor to the wife of a Roman senator, Petronius Maximus. However that may be, Maximus was now elected Emperor, and he, devising what seems a strange method of

avenging the insult offered to his own wife, tries to force the young widow of the murdered Valentinian to marry him. She, Eudoxia, daughter of the late Eastern Emperor Theodosius II, in her indignation, it is said, against her husband's murderer, invites the Vandal king to attack Rome. Perhaps however she had scarce time to do this—for her husband was killed early in 455, and by June Gaiseric and his Vandals were at the mouth of the Tiber. A few days afterwards they enter Rome, where the new Emperor has been stoned to death in a tumult when trying to flee from the city—'a Burgundian soldier claiming the honour of the first wound.' The sack of Rome by the Vandals will be described in one of the following chapters; here it will suffice to add that when Gaiseric returned to Sicily and Africa, carrying with him innumerable treasures (among which were the spoils of the Temple of Jerusalem), he took with him as prisoner this Empress who is said to have invited him to Italy, together with her two daughters, one of whom (Eudocia) married his son, the Vandal king Hunneric.[1]

Rome is for some months paralysed by the disaster. At last Theoderic II, the Visigoth king whose father had fought and fallen in the battle of Châlons, takes upon him, in conclave with the chief Romans and Goths of Gaul assembled at Arles, to elect as Emperor the commandant of the army in Gaul, a native of Auvergne named Avitus. He is accepted, though unwillingly, by the Senate and people of Italy, and his election is sanctioned by the Eastern Emperor, Marcian.

But the reign of Avitus was short. His chief military officer, Ricimer, a barbarian—his mother being a Visigoth princess and his father a Suevian noble—inflicts a crushing naval defeat on the Vandals near Corsica, and, having thus gained popularity, seizes the reins of government, and for the next sixteen years (456–72) plays the *rôle* of King-Maker. First he deposes Avitus, who when attempting to escape is

[1] The Empress was after seven years allowed to return to Constantinople with her other daughter, Placidia, who in 472 married Olybrius, Emperor of the West.

seized by him at Placentia and suffers a fate that afterwards befell several other deposed magnates: he is forced to take the tonsure and is—*made a bishop!* (Others assert that he was killed, or died of the plague.) After an interregnum Ricimer selects Majorian as Emperor—a brave and energetic soldier; but his fleet of 300 ships is destroyed by Gaiseric off the coast of Spain—and on his return he is slain by soldiers of Ricimer's—or abdicates and dies.

Then follows another puppet—Libius Severus—during whose nominal reign (461–65) Ricimer rules supreme. But on account of the great increase of the Vandal power on the sea Ricimer is forced, on the death of Severus and after a further interregnum of eighteen months, to appeal to the Eastern Emperor, now Leo I, called the 'Thracian'—himself also the puppet of a barbarian general, Aspar by name, who at Constantinople is playing a *rôle* similar to that of Ricimer. Leo proposes Anthemius, whom Ricimer accepts, marrying his daughter (467). A great expedition of more than 1000 ships is then sent by Leo and Anthemius to crush the Vandals, but it fails, and Gaiseric (who lives on till 477) becomes all-powerful in the Mediterranean, dominating Sardinia and Sicily and ravaging at his ease the coasts of Italy.

Anthemius had become too popular. Ricimer therefore, collecting in Milan a large force of barbarians, besieges and sacks Rome, murders his father-in-law, and elects as Emperor a Roman noble, Olybrius, who had married the princess Placidia, Valentinian's daughter above mentioned. A few weeks after the murder of Anthemius the King-Maker Ricimer succumbs to an haemorrhage, and two months later Olybrius dies (472).

On Ricimer's death his nephew Gundobald, a Burgundian prince, takes his place and at Ravenna proclaims as Emperor a captain of the Imperial Household Brigade (*Comes Domesticorum*) named Glycerius. But the Empress Verina at Constantinople, ever ready to meddle, profits by the fatal illness of her husband, Leo the Thracian, to nominate as Emperor of the West a relative of hers called Julius Nepos.

When Nepos arrives in Italy Gundobald withdraws to his home in Burgundy, and Glycerius, fugitive from Ravenna, consents to be consecrated as Bishop of Salona, in Dalmatia; for a deposed magnate in these ages was fortunate if he could choose tonsure and ordination, or even episcopal consecration, instead of having his tongue cut out and his eyes blinded by means of a basin of red-hot metal (a process called in Italian *abbacinamento*).

But a rebellion now breaks out among the Gothic troops in Rome. Led by their general Orestes, they march upon Ravenna. Nepos takes flight and reaches Salona, where he probably meets his former rival, ex-Emperor Bishop Glycerius. Here he assumes the government of Dalmatia and rules for years, recognized as Roman Emperor by the court of Constantinople.

Orestes, the third of these Emperor-Makers, was probably a Roman patrician, though born in Illyricum. He had served in Attila's army and had been sent, as we shall see, by the Hun king as ambassador to Constantinople—possibly as fellow-envoy with Edeco, the father of Odovacar, who will soon appear on the stage. Himself a Roman—that is, an Italian and not a northern barbarian—he had to wife the daughter of Count Romulus, a Roman noble resident in Noricum, and this claim of his family to Roman lineage was probably the reason why he dared what not even Ricimer himself would have dared to do—namely to proclaim his own son as Emperor. The youth's name, inherited or assumed on his accession, combined the names of the first King and the first Emperor of Rome. He is generally known as Romulus Augustulus, though the contemptuous or affectionate diminutive is not found on his coins.

One might have expected that the fact of the Roman blood and Roman sympathies of the youthful Emperor and of Orestes himself would have secured the stability of their rule. But this very fact seems to have caused its overthrow. Stilicho and other barbarians who rose to power had been ruined by the patriotic hatred of the Romans, *i.e.* the native Italians.

Orestes is ruined by refusing the demand of his barbarian troops—mostly Scirians and Herulians, formidable in their numbers and influence. Their demand was that one-third of the land should be given over to them—which meant that Italy would henceforth be to a large extent populated by barbarians.

A rebellion hereupon breaks out under the leadership of Odovacar (Odoacer), an officer of the Herulian troops and probably the son of Edeco, the Scirian barbarian already mentioned as one of Attila's envoys to the Byzantine court of Theodosius II. Orestes flees to Ticinum (later Pavia), which is captured and sacked. He escapes to Placentia (Piacenza), but is there overtaken and slain. The life of Augustulus, who had taken refuge in Ravenna, is spared by Odovacar. What befell him has already been told in the Preface, and a fuller description of the place of his imprisonment will be found elsewhere.[1] With the fall of Augustulus in 476 may be considered to have fallen the Western Empire—that is, the ancient *Imperium Romanum*.

[1] See end of Part I.

ROMAN EMPERORS

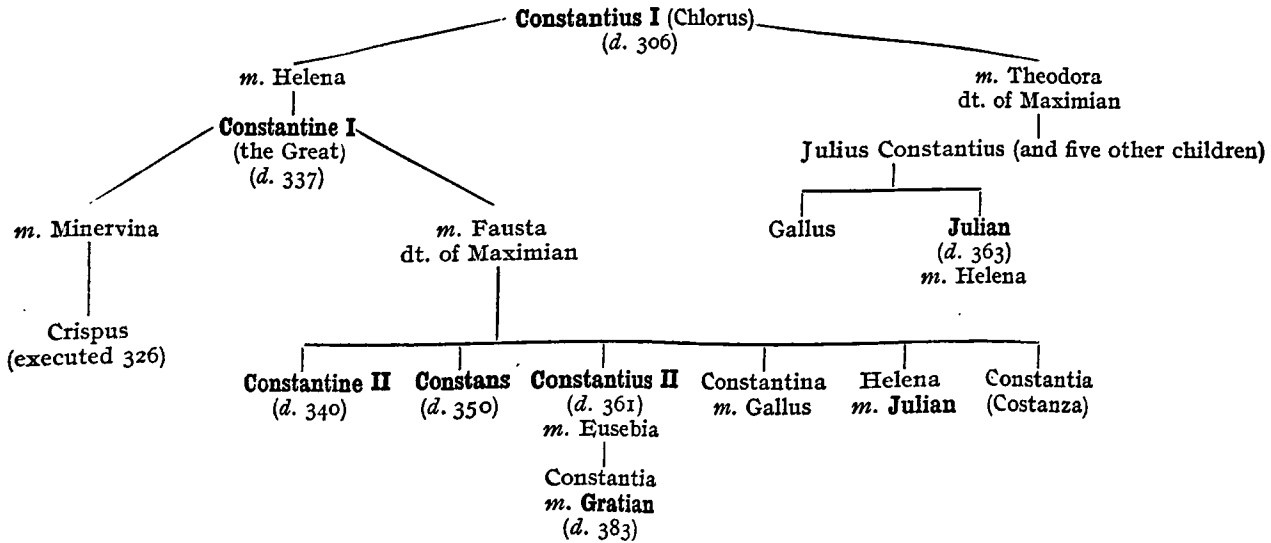
FROM DIOCLETIAN TO ROMULUS AUGUSTULUS

305–476

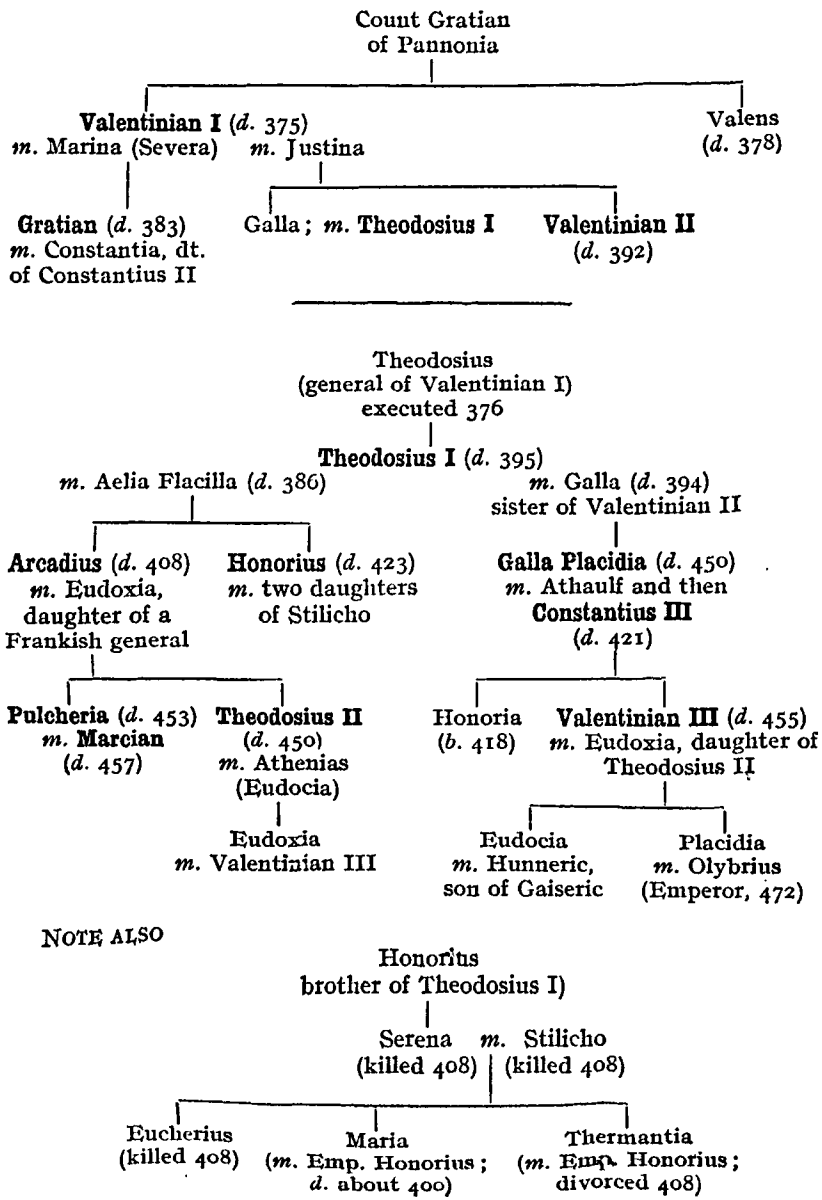
Diocletian, Maximian	abdicate 305	
Constantius I (Chlorus)	305–6	
Galerius	305–11	
Constantine I (the Great)	306–37	(Sole Emperor for fourteen years)
Severus	306–7	
Licinius	307–23	
Maximian (reassumes purple)	306–10	
Maxentius (his son)	306–12	
Maximin	308–14	
Constantine II	337–40	
Constans	337–50	
Constantius II	337–61	(Sole Emperor for eleven years)
Julian	361–63	
Jovian	363–64	

WESTERN EMPIRE		EASTERN EMPIRE	
Valentinian I	364–75	Valens	364–78
Gratian	367 (375)–83		
Valentinian II	375–92		
[Maximus (Britain & Gaul)	383–88]	Theodosius I	378–95
Theodosius I (also Emperor of East)	392–95		
[Eugenius	393–94]		
Honorius	395–423	Arcadius	395–408
		Theodosius II (and Pulcheria, his sister)	408–50
Theodosius II (also Emperor of East)	423–25		
Valentinian III (under regency of his mother Galla Placidia until 440)	425–55	Marcian (and Pulcheria till 453)	450–57
Petronius Maximus	455		
Avitus	455–56		
Majorian	457–61	Leo I (the Thracian) [Elected by the barbarian general Aspar, whom he kills in 471]	457–74
Libius Severus	461–65		
Anthemius	467–72		
Olybrius	472		
Glycerius	473–74	Leo II	474
Julius Nepos	474–75	Zeno	474–91
Romulus Augustulus	475–76	[Zeno was Leo II's father, an Isaurian, originally named Trascallisaeus. He married Ariadne, daughter of Leo I and Verina. He succeeded — having perhaps murdered—his own son, who died soon after accession.]	

FAMILY OF CONSTANTINE



FAMILIES OF VALENTINIAN I AND THEODOSIUS I



NOTE ALSO

CHAPTER I

WHY THE EMPIRE FELL

THE subject of this volume divides itself naturally into five parts. The first extends to the fall of the so-called Western Roman Empire—that is to the deposition of Romulus Augustulus in the year 476 and the extinction in Italy, for over three centuries, if not for ever, of that title of Roman Emperor which had been borne, rather discontinuously it must be allowed, and often with no lineal or legal right, by about seventy successors of the great Augustus, not counting numerous and sometimes simultaneous usurpers both in Italy and in other parts of the West.

But when we speak of the fall of the Western Empire it must be remembered that by the year 476 the Empire of the West, which in the time of Constantine had comprised half the Roman world—namely, the six vast 'dioceses' of Britain, the two Gauls, Spain, Italy, North-West Africa—now no longer existed.[1] Britain had been abandoned to the Picts and Scots and Angles and Saxons, the fifteen provinces of Gaul were occupied by independent kingdoms of Franks and Visigoths and Burgundians and Alemanni, Spain was ruled by Visigoths and Suevi, and Africa together with Sardinia and Sicily was in the power of Gaiseric the Vandal. Therefore when Odovacar deposed the boy-Emperor Augustulus the so-called Western Empire consisted only of Italy, with the provinces of Noricum and Rhaetia to the north of the Alps; to which perhaps we may add the tract of Dalmatia, on the east coast of the Adriatic, whither an expelled Roman Emperor (Nepos) had retired, and where he was supported in his little *imperium in*

[1] See Maps I and II.

imperio by the then ruling power in Constantinople, the Dowager-Empress Verina.

The deposition of Augustulus may thus be regarded as the abolition of the name of what had in reality already ceased to exist—that mighty Empire of which Rome was the centre and which in the days of Trajan (*c.* 100) extended from the Caspian to the Atlantic and from the deserts of Libya to the highlands of Caledonia, and included also a great province, that of Dacia, beyond the Danube, although Augustus, a century earlier, had wisely chosen this river as the north-eastern boundary of the Roman world.

And it was from this quarter that trouble came. Trajan's annexation of Dacia (the country between the Theiss and the Pruth) created an artificial frontier of great extent which proved indefensible against the innumerable hordes of barbarians ever urged westward and southward by fresh waves of hostile migration from the far East. The Emperor Aurelian (*c.* 272) found it necessary to surrender the province to the Visigoths on the condition that they should not pass the Danube. He thus purchased a precarious truce of about a hundred years, interrupted by several campaigns in the time of Constantine, who on one occasion inflicted a crushing defeat on the barbarians and a loss, it is said, of 100,000 men. About 370 these Dacian Visigoths, as we have already seen (p. 7), were driven by the advancing hosts of the Huns across the Danube and were allowed to settle in Thrace; but shortly afterwards they rebelled and routed the imperial army in a great battle near Hadrianople, in which the Eastern Emperor, Valens, disappeared.

This was the serious beginning[1] of those barbarian invasions which were the immediate cause of the downfall of Rome and which play such a large part in the early history of medieval Italy. In another chapter I shall speak of the origin and the character of these northern and eastern races. Here I shall

[1] The *first* invasion of Italy by a Germanic people was by the Quadi and Marcomanni, who after years of conflict were repelled by M. Aurelius in 174. They were probably driven south by the Goths from Scandinavia.

touch briefly on certain characteristics of the later Roman Empire which seem to have accelerated its dissolution by making it more and more incapable of resisting the tide of barbarian conquest.

A world-empire, such as was the dream of Alexander and such as Rome seemed at one time not unlikely to realize, must ever be a construction doomed to collapse under its own superincumbent mass. It is true that the Romans were, if we except Germany, practically the masters of the world—*terrarum domini*—for some five centuries, from the sack of Carthage in 146 B.C. to the battle of Hadrianople in A.D. 378; but for how many centuries has stood the Colosseum since Rome fell?

The dream of a permanent world-empire may one day be realized in some such form as the Federation of the great nations and the Parliament of Man, but freedom and self-rule combined with voluntary submission to a central government in matters of common interest must doubtless be the essential characteristic of any such system; and this characteristic was conspicuously absent in the case of the Roman Empire.[1] The whole structure, composed of many and diverse races, was held together solely by the military and administrative authority of a single city, and existed mainly for the advantage of that one city, into whose treasuries from all quarters of the known world continually poured tribute and taxes and spoils of war. Hither from three continents Rome's triumphant generals were wont to bring countless captives home to grace their chariot-wheels and to fill the public coffers or the purses of their captors with the proceeds of their ransom or of their sale as slaves; for the social system of Imperial Rome—indeed, of the whole Empire—was built up to a very large extent on the perilous foundation of domestic slavery. Gibbon asserts that in the time of the Emperor Claudius the population of the Empire amounted to about 120 millions, of whom about sixty millions were slaves; and in the time of Diocletian, according to Bryce,

[1] As I had lived many years in Germany, and was still living there, I necessarily thought while writing this passage (in May 1914) of the fictitious and temporary fabric of the modern German (or rather, Prussian) Empire.

two-thirds of the whole population of the Empire were of servile origin.

The plunder and tribute of foreign countries and the importation of innumerable slaves tended more and more to the elimination of the Roman middle class, and, while favouring enormously the enrichment of the home and provincial official, the army contractor, and the great landowner, caused the formation of a huge class of dependents and serfs on the vast estates in the country and of a poverty-stricken city-rabble ever more miserably enslaved by the richer classes, more hopelessly entangled in the toils of usurers and more eager but more powerless to rise against their oppressors, who knew full well how to gain their acquiescence and their applause by the largess of bread and circus games. At the head of this social system stood a monarch invested with powers almost absolute, surrounded by a dense phalanx of hereditary land-proprietors and officials and with a great army at his beck and call.

And the nature of this army afforded yet another danger to the Empire. In the days of the ancient monarchy and the early Republic the whole male population formed the 'exercitus' and almost every adult citizen was a soldier. In later days too, in the days when Cannae was fought and Carthage was sacked, as also in the days of Caesar, the army of Rome was composed exclusively of Roman citizens—of the Romans themselves or their allies—of citizens who owned and cultivated Italian soil, who took part in the great assemblies which gave laws to the Roman world, and who might be called from the plough or the workshop to die for Rome or to lead her army to victory.

As the bounds of the Empire extended it became ever more difficult to find enough recruits. By Marius the riff-raff of the Roman plebs and the off-scourings of the allies were enlisted as mercenaries ; by Marcus Aurelius the privilege of serving was extended to the free population of all the Roman world ; [1]

[1] Claudius II (268–70) incorporated in the legions a large body of vanquished Goths, and a few years later the Emperor Probus distributed 16,000 Germans among the imperial forces.

soon slaves were admitted, and finally barbarians, and these ere long formed the greater part of the standing armies which Rome had to support, and on which she had to rely for the maintenance of her authority in the distant provinces of three continents.

To pay for these great mercenary armies taxes were constantly increased until the burden became almost intolerable, and until the one apparent function of the Government was to extort money.

Lastly, one of the chief causes which conduced to the dissolution of the Empire was the marvellous growth and the final triumph of Christianity, the deep-lying and vital principles of which were subversive not only of paganism as a recognized religion but of the very foundations on which was built up the whole social system, perhaps one might say the whole civilization, material and intellectual, of the Roman world. In his great work on the *City of God* St. Augustine doubtless voiced the feelings of Christendom when he spoke with awe of the sack of Rome by Alaric as an act of God's wrath against the pagans who trusted still in their idols. Nor did he speak with awe alone, but almost with exultation; and it is indeed true that, as in the days of Noë, some great deluge of disaster was sorely needed. Not only did both peasant and high-born senator, as we shall later see, cling tenaciously to the old superstitions and the old worship of *i dei falsi e bugiardi* long past the times of Julian the Apostate and even up to the days of St. Benedict, but the moral sense as well as the religious instincts had sunk, in spite of the example of many noble characters and the well-meaning but ill-directed efforts of Stoicism, even of such Stoicism as that of Epictetus and of Marcus Aurelius, to a level from which nothing could rescue them but that new order of things which had been foretold not only by Jewish prophets but perhaps by a sibylline utterance of Virgil himself.[1] And doubtless many besides Virgil, even if they did not dimly foresee the coming of the New Age,

[1] Virg., *Ecl.* iv.: *Magnus ab integro saeclorum nascitur ordo . . .* 'The great order [series] of the ages is born anew . . .'

longed for a better state of things. This is very plainly seen in the case of Tacitus, who in his *Germania* describes with enthusiasm the nobler traits in the character and life of the Germani and seems to forebode the coming downfall of the Empire.

And however terrible were the sufferings brought upon Italy by foreign invasion and domination, some at least of her so-called barbarian invaders were of noble and virile stock, and although they probably did not influence the future Italians as much as is sometimes supposed, having been in most cases a body of warriors and officials numerically small in comparison with the native population, they infused new blood and invigorating energy and instituted the beginnings of the new order of things, thus laying the foundation of the political, artistic, intellectual, and religious civilization of modern Christian Europe, whereas the Eastern Empire, though its existence was prolonged for nearly a thousand years, sank ever lower into degeneracy and finally fell a prey to the Turk.[1]

It is indeed true that, ere this new order of things could prevail, Italy had to pass through dark ages compared with which the age of Hadrian and the Antonines, or even the age described by the *Satires* of Juvenal, was enlightened and humane; and it is true that the discords between the various schools of the new religion surpassed in violence and virulence everything of the kind in classical times and that the persecutions of Christians by Christians proved more terrible and revolting than all the martyrdoms from the time of Nero to that of Diocletian. But perhaps in order to reach a higher stage of evolution it is ever needful to revert for a time to a lower.

[1] With whom that self-styled Caesar, the pious lord of the modern Huns, is at present leagued against European Christendom.

CHAPTER II

THE BARBARIANS

THE invaders of Italy have been many. In the course of this volume we shall meet, as well as less important tribes, the Visigoths, Huns, Vandals, Ostrogoths, Lombards, Franks, Saracens, Normans, French, and Spaniards, besides the Byzantines of the Eastern Empire and the Germans of the so-called Holy Roman Empire. In the first Part, however, we shall be limited to the first three of these invaders, and in the present chapter I shall give some information about them, after having cast a glance backward for a few moments into the past.

In very early ages Central Europe was occupied by Aryan and perhaps other races, who are said to have come originally from the East—from Northern India and from lands beyond the Volga and the Ural Mountains. Some 1500 years before the Christian era the Achaeans (fair-haired leaders perhaps of darker Eastern tribes) poured down from the north into Greece. They were followed by the Dorians, another Central European Aryan people, and about three centuries later we hear of all Asia Minor being deluged by the Cimmerians, a people of Eastern origin, who have bequeathed their name to the Crimea and were perhaps of the same great family as the Celts, or Gauls, who captured Rome in 390 B.C., and who from an early age occupied the north of Italy (the *Gallia Cisalpina* or *Togata* of the Romans).. These Celts, or Gauls, were also closely related to the Cimbrians (Cymry?), whose mighty hordes overwhelmed Gaul and Spain early in the second century before our era and were finally vanquished by Marius in a great battle fought near Vercelli (101 B.C.).

Allied to the Cimbrians were the Teutons, a Germanic people,[1] who were conquered also by Marius at Aquae Sextiae (Aix), in Gaul. The south of Gaul was then formed into a Roman province (whence the name Provence), and Julius Caesar subdued the rest of the Gallic land, which together with Britain formed one of the four vast 'Prefectures' of the later Roman Empire.

Caesar also routed the Germani, led by Ariovistus, and chased them across the Rhine; but he prudently desisted from attempting the conquest of Germany, and made the Rhine the east boundary of the Roman territory. Drusus, the stepson of Augustus, carried war into the heart of Germany, and advanced as far as the Elbe; but some eighteen years later (A.D. 9) a Roman army of three legions under Varus was annihilated by the Germans under Arminius (*i.e.* Hermann, 'Army-man') at the battle in the Teutoburger Wald, a wooded tract some hundred miles north-east of Cologne; and although another imperial prince, Germanicus, succeeded in restoring the Roman prestige by reoccupying most of the country, he was recalled by the jealousy of his uncle Tiberius, and no further attempt was made to incorporate Germany in the Empire. Except for the temporary annexation of Dacia, which has been mentioned, the policy adopted by Augustus after the defeat of Varus was continued by his successors, and the well-fortified[2] frontiers afforded by the Rhine and the Danube proved an impregnable bulwark during about two hundred and fifty years—until that fatal permission given to great multitudes of Visigoths to cross the Danube which ended in the disaster of Hadrianople in 378.

[1] The words 'Germanic' and 'German' are often of uncertain meaning in English. The Goths, Franks, Angles, and other tribes were of 'Germanic' stock, but the word 'Germans' should properly be used only of the 'Germani,' *i.e.* the inhabitants of the 'Germania' of *classical* times, about whom we learn so much from Caesar and Tacitus.

[2] One of the most interesting of these forts is at Kaiseraugst (*Colonia Augusta*),[1] some twelve miles upstream from Basel, built in 27 B.C.—the year in which the first Emperor received his title 'Augustus.' It was provided with a spacious and massive theatre, lately fully excavated and restored.

When this disaster was mentioned before (pp. 7 and 22) it was explained that the Goths were forced across the Danube by the advancing hosts of the Huns. I shall now briefly explain who these Goths were, and how they and the Vandals and several other peoples who had settled in Central Europe were driven southwards and westwards by the wild hordes of this Tartar race, the Huns, and hurled against the frontiers of the Western Empire—a movement of such magnitude and such consequence that it is known as the Migration of Nations —the Völkerwanderung. Then, in later chapters, we shall follow in fuller detail the three great barbarian invasions of Italy which were the result of this movement—that of the Visigoths under Alaric, that of the Huns themselves under Attila, and that (from Africa) of Gaiseric and his Vandals.

The Goths were a Germanic race which is believed to have come to Central Europe from Scandinavia,[1] where the name Gothland still exists. If this be so, and if it is true that every nation speaking a language belonging to the great Aryan family came originally from the regions beyond the Caspian, it would follow that the ancestors of the Goths, at some distant epoch in the past, made their way through Russia to Scandinavia. But, however that may be, in the age of the Antonines, when we first have trustworthy mention of them,[2] they are in the country of the Vistula, south of the Baltic, and about seventy years later (*c.* 250) we find that they have migrated to the region of the Borysthenes (Dnieper) and the north-west shores of the Euxine, and are proving so troublesome to Roman Dacia that the Emperor Decius heads a campaign against them and is slain, together with his son, in battle.

At this time the Gothic nation consisted of East Goths, West Goths, and those Gepidae[3] whom we shall find in later times

[1] The old northern mythology of Valhalla is certainly far grander in its Scandinavian than in its Germanic form and would seem to point to Scandinavia as its home. But this may be due to the fact that paganism lasted far longer in Scandinavia and developed a fine literature in the Eddas.

[2] Many older legends were given by the historians of the Goths, Cassiodorus and Jordanes (see Index), who describe how they crossed the Baltic.

[3] Jordanes asserts that 'Gepidae' means 'Loiterers,' and that the ship carrying this part of the nation across the Baltic 'lagged behind.'

occupying the regions of Dacia and Pannonia vacated by the Ostrogoths and Visigoths on their migrations further south and west. It was of course the West Goths who first came into collision with the Romans in Dacia. After the defeat and death of Decius a determined assault was made on these Visigoths by the Emperor Claudius II, whose 'litera laureata' to the Roman Senate affirmed that he had routed 320,000 of them and had destroyed 2000 of their ships; and he received from the Senate the title 'Gothicus'; but nevertheless about two years later (272) his successor, Aurelian, deemed it necessary to surrender the province to the barbarians, who founded there a very remarkable Gothic empire—a complex of the three great Gothic kingdoms. In the north (now Hungary) were the Gepidae, to the east (Moldavia and Bessarabia) were the Ostrogoths, and in Southern Dacia (now Rumania) were the Visigoths.

The Ostrogoths, who rose to power and formed a kind of Pan-Gothic supremacy under their celebrated king Hermanric,[1] remained for a long time pagans, uninfluenced by Roman civilization, as also did the Gepidae in Northern Dacia; but the Visigoths, being in closer touch with the Empire, became rapidly Romanized and Christianized—of which fact evidence still exists, for the modern Rumanians are to a large extent descendants of the Visigoths who remained behind here in Dacia (*c.* 378) when many of their fellows crossed the Danube and marched with Alaric down into Italy and eventually found their way to Gaul; and these modern Rumanians, in spite of all *deutsch* influence and all Turkish oppression, though hemmed in on all sides by Magyars and Slavs (or Slavicized Scythians, to give the Bulgars their real lineage),

[1] Hermanric = 'Army-man-prince.' The word *ric* [*rik*, *rich*], found in Al*aric*, Theod*eric*, etc., meant 'mighty'; e.g. *Gott der riche*, 'God the Mighty.' The *Nibelungenlied* word *Recke*, a prince or hero (nowadays a 'giant'), is evidently connected with it, and also possibly the Latin *rex*. Hermanric's dominions, says Gibbon, 'extended from the Baltic to the Euxine.' He lived over 100 years, and he was the ancestor, through the Amala family (see Index), of Theoderic the Great. He seems to have been a kind of emperor of all the Goths, the Visigoth rulers having at that time only the title of 'Judge.'

have preserved till the present day much of the Roman character in their language, literature, customs, and sympathies.

Among the civilizing influences brought to bear on these Visigoths was that of a great missionary—the Apostle of the Goths—Bishop Ulfilas (Vulfila). He was himself of Gothic origin, but he received a Greek and Roman education at Constantinople and devoted the rest of his life (from about 335 to 380) to converting his countrymen and to translating the Bible into Gothic. About 177 pages of a magnificent fifth-century manuscript of what is almost certainly his translation is still to be seen at Upsala. It is written in letters of silver and gold on purple parchment, and contains more than half the Gospels. Other Gothic manuscripts exist which give what are possibly portions of his translation of St. Paul's Epistles and of the Old Testament.[1]

For this version of the Bible he used partly letters of his own invention, partly Greek and Latin, and partly Runic script. This script had existed already for many centuries among the Goths, probably introduced into northern lands by river-traders from the Greek colonies on the Euxine, or by Phoenician navigators, or possibly brought by the ancestors of these northern Aryan peoples from their original home in the far East.

When Ulfilas was still a young man and was being educated at Constantinople he had doubtless come under the personal influence of Arius, whose doctrines were strongly favoured by Constantine during the latter years of his reign. Hence it came about that from the teachings of the Apostle of the Goths and other missionaries all the barbarian nations of Central Europe except the Franks were first converted from their northern or eastern paganism to Arianism; and it was not until considerably later that Catholicism prevailed over this widespread form of heterodoxy. But, whatever may be thought of the merits of Ulfilas as a Christian missionary and

[1] It is said that he would not translate the books of Samuel and the Kings lest they should encourage war! As he lived till 380 he was probably among the fugitives who crossed the Danube in 378.

a disseminator of the knowledge of the Bible, there can be no doubt as to the value of his work from a literary point of view. 'When we examine these precious relics of the fourth century which bear the name of Ulfilas, we often meet the very words with which we are so familiar in our English Bible, but linked together by a flexional structure that finds no parallel short of Sanscrit. This is the oldest book we can go back to written in a language like our own. It has therefore a national interest for us. . . . It is one of the finest specimens of ancient language.' [1]

We must now turn from the Goths to another nation, possibly also of Germanic stock, but more probably Slavonic—the Vandals. During the existence of the great Gothic kingdom, or empire, from about 250 to 400, they seem to have lived in the upper regions of the Elbe and the Oder, in which countries their descendants (the *Wenden*) and relics of their language (*wendisch*) perhaps still exist.

At the coming of the Huns (who, as we have seen and shall see, brought the whole of Central Europe into violent commotion, causing the Goths to invade the Roman Empire and also probably the Angles and the Saxons to invade Britain) the Vandals seem to have fled from their homes in what is now Saxony and Silesia and together with the Suevi (Swabians), the Alans,[2] and the Burgundians to have joined Alaric and his Visigoths in their first, unsuccessful invasions of Italy. Here, near Florence, the leader of this confederate army, Radegast, was captured and slain by the Roman general Stilicho (405). However, as we have seen, Stilicho had considered it necessary to withdraw the Roman legions not only from Britain but also from the Rhineland, and the great host of pagan [3] Vandals and their allies, being repulsed from Italy, passed over the Rhine (406) and devastated (says

[1] *The Philology of the English Tongue*, by J. Earle (Oxford Press). Quoted by Count Balzani.

[2] A mysterious people, perhaps of Turkish stock, driven westward by the Huns.

[3] Radegast, when on one campaign he nearly reached Rome, vowed to sacrifice the Roman senators to some northern gods—Thor and Woden perhaps.

Gibbon) the greater part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul. Many flourishing cities were sacked, thousands of Christians were massacred in the churches, 'the rich and extensive country, as far as the ocean and the Pyrenees, was delivered to the barbarians, who drove before them in a promiscuous crowd the bishop, the senator, and the virgin, laden with the spoil of their homes and altars.'

From these regions the Vandals and Suevi were not long afterwards ejected by the Visigoths, who, as we shall see later, after their sack of Rome in 410, made their way to the south of Gaul and founded a great Visigoth kingdom, whose capitals were Arles and Toulouse. In Spain, whither they were driven, the Vandals [1] settled for some time (the name Vandalusia, or Andalusia, being a relic of this sojourn), until the Visigoths followed them over the Pyrenees and harassed them for some years (*c.* 415–20). Then they seem to have been reorganized by the famous Gaiseric, who, perhaps on the invitation of the Roman general Boniface, crossed with the whole of his people to Africa. Thence, perhaps on the invitation of the Dowager-Empress Eudoxia, Gaiseric, who had built a powerful fleet, sailed across to South Italy and sacked Rome (455). But this is anticipating—for in another chapter I shall have to treat fully the subject of the Vandals in Africa and at Rome.

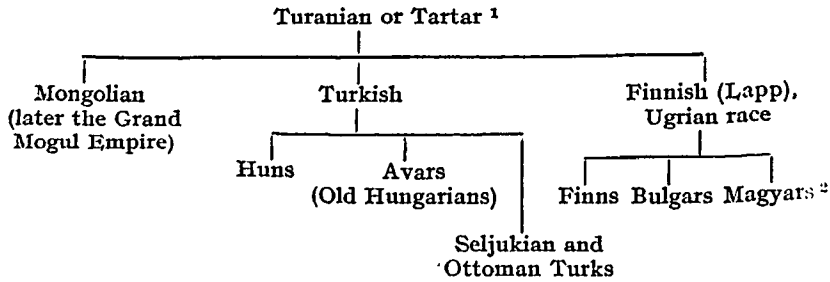
We have now to hear about the Huns—who they were and whence they came. Their invasions of Gaul and of Italy under Attila will be described later. Here we will follow their history, as far as it is known, from early times down to 445, when Attila, the 'Scourge of God,' came into power.

Except the Basques and a few other strange ingredients, such as relics of Saracen domination and the Jews, the population of Europe consists of two great families. To the Aryan (or Indo-European) belong the Celtic, the Greek, the Latin, the Germanic, and the Slavonic races. To the Turanian (or Mongolian) belong the Turks, Hungarians (Magyars), Finns, and Bulgarians—the last being Slavicized Sarmatians or

[1] The Suevi founded a kingdom in what is now Portugal.

Scythians, who were originally Mongols and, to judge from the description given by the great physician Hippocrates, were evidently like the Huns in appearance and in habits.

The following Table shows what is believed to be the lineage and the relationships of the Hunnish race:



According to old Chinese records, the 'Hiong-nu' were a great and restless nation that had existed in Central Asia from some 2000 years before our era—say, before the days of Abraham. It was to keep them out of China that the Great Wall was built. In a later age, after many severe conflicts, the Chinese crushed them (*c.* A.D. 90) and many of them migrated westwards. For some 300 years they lived between the Ural and the Volga, probably kept back by the Alans of the Don, a Turkish race already mentioned. These finally they conquered, and with them they marched again westward. The terror inspired by the approach of these Asiatic savages is reflected vividly in the chronicles of Jordanes, who likens them to beasts walking on their hind legs and to the hideous, misshapen wooden images erected on bridges. Nations, he says, whom they would never have conquered in fair fight fled horrified from them. 'They are more savage than savagery itself. They use no condiments, nor do they cook

[1] 'Tartar' is an incorrect form of the word 'Tatar,' due to the Greek and Latin word 'Tartarus' (Hell). For the general adoption of 'Tartar,' with its infernal associations, we are indebted, it is said, to St. Louis.

[2] The modern Hungarians, who falsely assert their descent from the Huns, are Magyars who about A.D. 900 drove out the older inhabitants of Hungary—probably the Avars. The name Hungar, or Ongar, given by the Slavs to the newcomer, has probably nothing to do with 'Hun,' but means of Ugrian, or Ogrian, race.

their food with fire, but eat raw flesh, after having kept it some time beneath their legs on the backs of their horses; for they are ever on horseback. They are small, agile, and strong. Their faces—though one can scarce call them human faces—are shapeless collops of flesh with two black sparkling points instead of eyes. They have very little beard, for they gash the faces of their infants with knives to accustom them to wounds even before they taste their mothers' milk, and flatten their noses with irons to make them appear more terrible to their enemies. They derived their origin from the commerce of evil spirits and the witches expelled from the forests by the Goths, for whose overthrow they were generated and born. These same evil spirits showed them the road they should take in order to attack the Goths; and it happened in this way. Some Huns when hunting came upon a deer which kept turning back and seeming to invite them to follow. They did so, and when the deer, as it went forward, had shown them how to cross over the Maeotic swamp, [Sea of Azof], it suddenly disappeared—which was a manifest proof that it was truly one of those evil spirits that were hostile to the Goths.'

The onset of the innumerable host of the Huns was irresistible. The aged Ostrogoth king Hermanric was slain—or slew himself—and his warriors were enrolled in the Hun army. Then the Dniester was crossed and the Visigoths were attacked. Some escaped northward to the Carpathians; others fled southward, communicating such panic to their fellow-countrymen in Lower Dacia that a vast multitude of perhaps a million, amongst whom were 200,000 armed men under their Captain or 'Judge,' Fritigern, flocked in terror across the Danube. The Romans—that is, the military powers of the Eastern Empire—after attempting vainly to stem the torrent, finding it impossible even to number and disarm them, allowed the Visigoths to settle in Moesia and Thrace. A terrible famine then broke out, of which the Roman officials took advantage. They bought from the starving fugitives not only costly objects but also thousands of slaves by means

of putrefying or repulsive meat, such as the flesh of dogs and vermin and sick cattle. Driven to despair, the Visigoths, in spite of the efforts of Fritigern, turn to plundering the country for the sake of food, and soon a fight takes place between the barbarians and the imperial troops while their generals are banqueting together—much in the same way as in the *Nibelungenlied* the men of Gunther and of Attila begin the quarrel which ends in the terrible catastrophe. Then follows, as we already know, a great battle not far from Hadrianople. The Emperor Valens disappears and the imperial army is routed with great carnage (378).

But to return to the Huns—they seem to have found Northern Dacia suited to their needs, for during the next fifty years or so they remained quietly there, possibly however harrying, annexing, or driving northwards and westwards various nations of Germany, such as the Saxons and the Franks. With the Eastern Empire they cultivated friendly relations. Hunnish soldiers at times fought as allies of the imperial legions, and they also improved the occasion by learning and importing into their home army Roman weapons, discipline, and tactics, and doubtless also Roman officers.

The sudden and threatening expansion and aggressiveness of the Hunnish empire when Attila became the sole king, in 445, will be described in a later chapter, when I undertake to relate his invasion of Gaul and of Italy.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIANITY AND PAGANISM

THE period that will chiefly occupy us in the next two chapters extends from the official recognition of Christianity by Constantine—the so-called 'Peace of the Church'—until the extinction of paganism in the Empire, which we may place about the end of the reign of Theodosius I (395) or the beginning of the fifth century; for paganism was by then practically extinct, although, as we have seen already, survivals were to be found even at Rome in the days of Alaric and of St. Augustine, and in obscurer resorts till much later, as at Cassino, where St. Benedict, it is said, about the year 529 overthrew a temple in which the country-folk, 'deluded and ill-disposed,' as Dante calls them, still sacrificed to the sun-god Apollo or some such 'demon.' A consecutive account of the historical facts of this period, from Constantine to Honorius, has been already given in the Outline, so that it will not here be necessary to restate them or to explain their sequence while attempting to describe briefly the wonderful and rapid growth of Christianity till its complete triumph over paganism.

Under Nero (54), Domitian (81), Decius (250), and other Emperors, even under Trajan and Marcus Aurelius himself, the Christians had suffered many and terrible persecutions. That instituted in 303 by Diocletian, at the instigation of the 'Caesar' Galerius, was the most terrible of all—especially in the East, where Galerius ruled; but even in Gaul and Britain great horrors were perpetrated, for the kindly Constantius Chlorus, the father of Constantine the Great, though he did what he could to alleviate the sufferings of the persecuted,

was obliged to publish and carry out the bloody imperial edict.[1]

As for Diocletian, he seems to have been weak rather than cruel. It was apparently with great unwillingness that he at last gave way to the importunities of Galerius. His proclivities seem to have been towards a philosophic and simple mode of life, if we may judge from the fact that when (like Charles the Fifth) he voluntarily abdicated at the zenith of his power and retired to his Dalmatian villa and gardens near Salona,[2] his one ambition seems to have been to grow prize vegetables. Urged by the ambitious Maximian to reassume the imperial purple and diadem, he is said to have answered, 'You wouldn't talk so if you had seen my splendid beans and cabbages.' And yet this is the man whose name —like that of Nero or Philip of Spain—is wont to awaken within us scarce any feelings but those of horror.

The story of Constantine's relations with Christianity, as told by his contemporary, Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, the father of ecclesiastical history, and as retailed by later writers, is such a tissue of legend and truth that it is very difficult to disentangle the facts from the fictions. I shall relate both without too anxiously attempting to discriminate them.

First then a few words about his mother, Helena—St. Helen of England, as she is not infrequently called. She shares with St. Alban, according to some writers, the glory of being one of the native saints of the early British Church, before the coming of the pagan 'English,' and nearly three centuries before the coming of the younger St. Augustine. Some also assert that she converted her illustrious son, and that thus the glory of establishing Christianity in the Empire is primarily due to a British woman. But Eusebius, our chief authority, tells us that she was herself converted in later life by Constantine. Nor is her origin at all certain. Some say she was a native of Bithynia, in Asia Minor; others that she was the

[1] The names of St. Maurice (Switzerland) and St. Alban (England) are connected with this persecution.

[2] The remains of this enormous 'villa' accommodate much of the modern town of Spalato.

daughter of the somewhat legendary King Coel (the 'old King Cole' of ballads?) and was born in his city of Colchester; others that her father was a York innkeeper; and it is conjectured that while serving in the army of Maximian, in the years preceding the dramatic usurpation of Carausius in Britain, Constantius met Helena at Colchester or at York. But if this were so, by the year 272 Helena had followed her husband to the Eastern Empire; for it seems certain that Constantine was born in this year at Naissus, in Moesia—and not in Britain, as some have imagined.

Before Constantius returned (in 293) to Britain, invested with the powers of a 'Caesar,' Helena had been repudiated (p. 1). During the years of her humiliation she probably lived in the East, as her son Constantine did; but when he was named as successor by his father and proclaimed Emperor by the troops (305) instead of the son[1] of her high-born rival Theodora, she must have regained prestige. About 326, soon after the foundation of New Rome (Constantinople), she was at Jerusalem, where, according to the legend, she discovered the Holy Sepulchre under a temple of Venus which had been founded by Hadrian; and she built (or induced Constantine to build) on the site of the demolished temple a church which perhaps in part still exists and is the earliest specimen[2] of an important building erected for Christian worship, except the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem. Moreover, Helena is said to have discovered, buried on Mount Calvary, the True Cross. All three crosses were found, it is said, and also the original superscription; but as this was lying detached it was necessary to discover by some other means which of the three

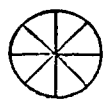
[1] A child of twelve; later the unambitious 'Patrician' Julius Constantius, father of the Emperor Julian.

[2] Some believe this to be the round Church of the Resurrection, almost entirely destroyed in 1808 by fire. Others believe the 'Dome of the Rock' (Mosque of Omar), which is said to stand on the site of Solomon's Temple, to have been originally the Constantine Church of the Holy Sepulchre; but the present building dates mainly from the seventh century and is probably of Mohammedan origin, covering the rock from which Mohammed flew to heaven. It can be recognized in Raffael's *Spozalizio* and other pictures. Constantine built several other churches in Jerusalem.

crosses was that on which the Saviour suffered. A dying woman was therefore brought, and was restored to health by touching the true relic. Although the discovery of the Cross was accepted as a fact both by the Eastern and the Western Churches, there is no mention of it in the contemporary ecclesiastical chronicler, Eusebius, nor is it noticed in the journals of a Gaulish pilgrim who was at Jerusalem seven years after Helena's visit.

The conversion of Constantine himself is by ecclesiastical writers often attributed to a vision of the Cross [1] which he beheld above the noonday sun—some say near Andernach, some near Verona, some elsewhere—when marching from the Rhineland to Rome in order to attack Maxentius. Eusebius asserts that Constantine assured him with a solemn oath that this vision had appeared to him and to his whole army, and related how on the following night Christ Himself appeared to him and, pointing to a cross, bade him inscribe it on the shields of his soldiers and use it as his ensign of war. Thus, it is said, originated the celebrated standard to which the puzzling name *labărum* was given. It consisted of a silken flag embroidered with the portrait of the Emperor and surmounted by a golden crown, or circlet, in which was enclosed the mystic monogram formed out of a cross and a kind of crook, which may represent the two initial letters of Christ's name (*i.e.* the Greek letters X and P).

Some three years after the battle at the Red Rocks near Rome, in which Maxentius, attempting to fly over the Milvian Bridge, was drowned (unless perhaps his decapitated body was hurled thence into the river), Constantine erected a triumphal arch, still to be seen at Rome, on which a most inartistic carving represents the battle.[2] On this arch there is

[1] Explained by some as a solar-ray phenomenon. Possibly also the *labărum* monogram was originally a solar symbol, such as 

[2] See Fig. 2 and explanation.

also an inscription which in somewhat ambiguous language seems to attribute the victory to the inspiration of the Divine Being (*Instinctu Divinitatis*). Unless these words are a later insertion, they might seem to confirm the assertion that he attributed his victory to the favour of the God of the Christians, who had given him the Cross as his ensign and had assured him by a supernatural vision that in this sign he would conquer.[1]

But it is difficult to say whether Constantine at this time, or indeed at any time, sincerely accepted, or publicly proclaimed, the sole truth and efficacy of the Christian religion. That he did not admit the claims of Catholic orthodoxy is certain. The legend that he and his son Crispus were baptized by Bishop Silvester in the Lateran Baptistery before their departure in 323 for the campaign against Licinius and the capture of Constantinople—the scene of which baptism is depicted in one of the Vatican frescoes—is not credible; it doubtless first arose at the same time as the still more celebrated legend of Constantine's notorious Donation to Silvester, of which we shall hear when we reach the times of Charles the Great. Moreover, it seems indubitable that towards the end of his life he conspicuously favoured Arius himself and that he received the rite of baptism, when he was on his death-bed, from the hands of an Arian prelate, Eusebius of Nicomedia, who had been exiled when the Council of Nicaea condemned Arianism, but had been recalled and reinstated by the Emperor. Amid so many conflicting accounts it is impossible to feel any certainty. On the one hand we are told that Constantine showed great favour to his Christian subjects; that he abolished crucifixion because of his reverence for Christ; that shortly after his victory over Maxentius he issued the famous Edict of Milan, recognizing Christianity as the State religion;[2] that he took a zealous part in doctrinal discussions, and

[1] The *labărum*, the cross, and the monogram are found on coins of the Christian Emperors, and the well-known words *In hoc signo vinces* or *vincas* occur.

[2] The 'Peace of the Church' celebrated last year (1913) its sixteenth centennial. But the fact of the promulgation of any edict is now becoming a subject of doubt, and it seems likely that in any case nothing more than tolerance and religious liberty was proclaimed.

even preached on the most sublime and abstruse subjects of theology;[1] that he proclaimed to the world that neither his person nor his image should ever again be seen within an idolatrous temple; that he issued medals, pictures, and coins (some of which exist) which represented him bearing the Christian ensign and exhibiting a devout and suppliant posture before symbols of the Christian religion; that he insulted the many pagan members of the Roman Senate by refusing to take part in a procession in honour of Jupiter Capitolinus; that he summoned the Council which defined our faith; that, lastly, his statue erected in Rome represented him holding a cross and bore an inscription that attributed his victories to its influence.

On the other hand it is asserted that, probably till a late period in his life, he was a devout worshipper of the sun-god—of Apollo, or of Mithras;[2] that on coins he represented himself with these heathen deities; that he proclaimed the apotheosis of his father Constantius, thus adding him to the conclave of the Olympian divinities; that he legalized divination by pagan augurs; that he introduced pagan elements into the new religious system, identifying the Lord's Day with what he calls in his Edict the 'ancient and venerable day of the Sun,' and fixing for Western (perhaps only Roman) Christianity the festival of Christ's birth at the season of the new birth of the sun, just after the winter solstice.[3] Lastly, a very curious

[1] In one of his extant *Orationes ad Sanctos* he appeals to the evidence of Virgil's famous *Fourth Eclogue*, in which the pagan poet utters what is very like a prophecy of the coming of the Messiah. It is just possible that Virgil may have had access to so-called Sibylline Books, of which 2000 were burnt by Augustus and some of which may have contained extracts from the Jewish prophets. St. Augustine and other Early Christian writers quote the Sibyllae with reverence. In Italian art they were frequently depicted with the Jewish prophets or with angels, as in the Sistine Chapel and in a fresco by Raffael in S. Maria della Pace at Rome.

[2] For many ages the worship of the sun-god was confused with that of Jehovah and of Christ. *Cf.* Greek Ἠέλιος (Helios) with Jewish El, Elias, etc. Even to-day the Greek islander confuses Helios with Elias. In Ireland St. Patrick had to preach against sun-worship.

[3] On coins of Constantine the sun is entitled 'the unconquered comrade,' an expression used in the cult of Mithras, the sun-god, alluding to the yearly recovery of his power after the solstice.

proof of his strangely impartial zeal, or indifference, may be adduced: on a lofty column (a part of which still exists at Constantinople under the name of the Burnt Pillar) was set a great bronze statue, some say the work of Pheidias himself, brought from Athens. This statue, which represented Helios with a radiate crown (such as that which on coins is given to the colossal sun-god of Rhodes), Constantine adopted as a portrait of himself in the double character of the sun-god and of Christ, substituting in the place of the original spiked solar rays perhaps the nails of the Cross.[1]

We may perhaps regard such acts as due to policy, or tolerance, or a curious combination of zeal for the external forms of both paganism and Christianity, but it is difficult to believe that Constantine was actuated by any of the nobler teachings of either religion. Indeed, we cannot but be shocked at the cold-blooded inhumanity of the man who, amidst all his religious professions, after murdering his political rival (Licinius) and his family, caused his own son and his own wife [2] to be executed, and that, too, on charges which seem to have been unfounded.

In the year 325, which intervened between these two bloody acts of Constantine, he presided at the great Council which he had summoned to meet at Nice (Nicaea, in Bithynia) to determine the momentous questions that had arisen between the followers of Arius, a priest of Alexandria, and those who, led by Athanasius, later Archbishop of Alexandria, claimed under the name of Catholics to represent the one universal Christian Church.

Constantine accepted and signed the decree of the Nicene

[1] These great nails (used for crucifixion) were discovered, according to the legend, by Helena. Constantine is said (but it seems incredible) to have used one to form a bit for his war-horse.

[2] For Crispus and his stepmother Fausta, whose three sons succeeded Constantine as Emperors, in spite of the shameful death of their mother, see p. 4, and Table, p. 19. The aged Helena, Constantine's mother, still smarting doubtless under her humiliation caused by Theodora, the sister of Fausta, is believed to have inflamed Constantine against his wife. She was steamed to death in a hot bath. In Raffael's *Baptism of Constantine* there is a finely conceived (of course imaginary) portrait of Crispus.

Council—the condemnation of Arianism. But this heresy prevailed for yet many years in Constantinople and most of the Eastern Empire, being adopted even by the Synod of Jerusalem, the very home of Christianity, as well as by the Goths and Vandals in the West and in Africa; and, as we have already seen, Constantine himself ere long relapsed from his temporary adhesion to Catholicism and was finally baptized by an Arian bishop. To discuss the question which so inflamed the Arians and the Catholics, and which caused for five centuries (until the coming of the Franks) such bitter and miserable strife and schism in the Church, lies beyond the range of this volume. All know that it consisted in different views of the nature of Christ, in regard to His consubstantial identity with the First Person of the Trinity and His existence as the Logos from all eternity, and that the Athanasian Creed contains a full, if not an entirely intelligible, statement of the Catholic, as contrasted with the Arian, view. Moreover, most know that there was also a moderate party of semi-Arians, who, while denying the *homo-ousia* (identical essence) of the Son and the Father, admitted their *homoi-ousia* (similar essence)—the distinction between which terms we may leave to theologians, merely citing the very true remark of Gibbon that 'sounds and characters which approach the nearest to each other frequently represent the most opposite ideas.' Perhaps I may add that, although Gibbon seems himself to be entirely unconscious of the importance of the question at issue when he tells us that 'the profane of every age have derided the furious contests which the difference of a single diphthong excited among the Homo-ousians and the Homoi-ousians,' nevertheless I think most of us must agree with him when he notes that as soon as the Christians found themselves secure from external persecution[1] they began to persecute each other, 'being more solicitous to explore the nature than to practise the laws of their Founder.'

The Alexandrian priest whose teachings in the space of

[1] Note also the violent recrudescence of internal discord on the restoration of Christianity by Jovian.

about six years (319–25) had been so widely accepted by minds incapable of grasping the doctrine of the Three in One—the same kind of minds as those which later, in the great iconoclastic controversy, could not comprehend the subtle distinction between the cult of images and idolatry—was, in consequence of the Nicene verdict, excommunicated and exiled, together with many Arian prelates; and all Arian writings were condemned to the flames. But, as we have seen, both Arius and his followers, such as Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia, were soon recalled, and during the last years of Constantine's reign he seems to have been entertained with distinct favour at the imperial court. In 336, the last year of Constantine's reign, orders were given for the public admission of Arius to the Eucharist in the Cathedral of Constantinople, but on the day fixed for the ceremony he suddenly expired, in consequence, it was said, of intestinal rupture—an occurrence which reminded his adversaries of the fate of Judas, but which perhaps was due to poison.

Athanasius survived his great rival thirty-seven years. He lived to see four Emperors succeed Constantine on the Eastern throne. Four times he was driven from Alexandria by his religious adversaries. He was deposed by Constantius, and, after restoration by Constans, was again deposed by Julian and restored by his great patron and admirer Jovian,[1] and once more perhaps was exiled by Valens. But he survived all these dangers—aided once, if not twice, it is said, by miraculous disappearance and supernatural transportation into the deserts of the Thebaïs when on the point of being captured. At the age of eighty he died in peace at Alexandria, the patriarchal throne of which city he had occupied, interruptedly, for forty-six years.

These quarrels between Trinitarians and Arians may seem to have little or no connexion with Italy, but we shall see ere long how they led directly to that conflict between the civil and the ecclesiastical powers,[2] between Emperors and Popes,

[1] Jovian's reverence for Athanasius almost amounted to deification.

[2] It should be here noticed that by the foundation of Constantinople,

which plays so important a part in Italian history; and before dismissing the subject it will be better to say how in the Western Empire the schism was finally healed.

We have already seen that the Goths and Vandals and other barbarians were primarily converted by Arian missionaries. The great kingdoms of the Visigoths in Gaul and Spain, of the Vandal Gaiseric in Africa, and of the Ostrogoth Theoderic in Italy were all, so to speak, hotbeds of Arian heresy [1] until the extinction (534 and 553) of the two latter supremacies. Some thirty years later the royal heir of the Visigoth throne in Spain renounces Arianism and rebels against his father, and is executed. (He was afterwards canonized as St. Hermenegild.) His brother succeeds to the throne and induces the whole nation to embrace Catholicism. Then, about 603, by the influence of Queen Theodelinda, herself influenced by Pope Gregory the Great, the Lombards, hitherto Arian, become orthodox Catholics. Meanwhile the Visigoths' and other inhabitants of Gaul have been converted to the Trinitarian creed by the Franks, and some time before the descent of Pipin and Charles the Great into Italy Arianism is eradicated.

But, having turned aside to note the end of this fratricidal conflict—the most momentous of the many [2] which disturbed

where Constantine erected fourteen important churches and decorated his new buildings with many marbles and ancient works of art from Greece, Rome felt herself not only deprived of her position as political metropolis, but was also aggrieved, as the seat of the successors of St. Peter, by the rival patriarchate—and still more by the attempt of Constantine (oblivious apparently of 'Donations' and other such concessions) to constitute himself the Head of the Church. 'The prerogatives of the King of Heaven,' as Gibbon says, 'were settled, or modified, in the cabinet of an earthly monarch,' instead of in that of the Bishop of Rome. This seems to be the real beginning of the great feud—which has continued for nigh sixteen centuries. The next important step was the election by Constantius, Constantine's son, of an antipope (Felice), followed by the triumphant return of the deposed and exiled Pope Liberius and the flight of the Emperor's *protégé*.

[1] The persecution of the 'Catholics' by Gaiseric and his successors was of the most terrible nature. The name 'Catholic,' claimed by the Trinitarians, who were for centuries greatly outnumbered, first acquired some justification on the disappearance of Arianism.

[2] Even to name the heresies against which Athanasian orthodoxy had to contend is here impossible. Alexandria was constantly the arena of bloody conflicts—some of the bloodiest of which are recalled by the names of Hypatia and of Cyril, the patriarch and saint, her murderer.

the peace and imperilled the existence of the Church—let us now return to our theme, the fight against the common foe, paganism, the final overthrow of which was effected long before the total disappearance of the Arian heresy.[1]

And first a few words about a form of paganism that proved perhaps a more dangerous, certainly a more subtle, adversary than the gross superstitions of the vulgar or the seductive magnificence of the heathen ritual.

Some of the abstruser doctrines of Athanasian Christianity, such as those concerning the Trinity and the Logos, have what appears to be a curious affinity to doctrines of certain ancient Greek philosophers—Pythagoras and Plato, for instance—whether because similar forms of thought are wont to spring from the deeper instincts and convictions of human nature, or because Christian theologians adopted forms which gave striking expression to their conceptions of the Godhead. Alexandria, the city of Athanasius and of Arius, was the home of what is called Neoplatonism. A century before their day Plotinus founded this system of thought, which on a groundwork of Platonic and Pythagorean principles was built up by him and his celebrated disciple Porphyry into a philosophical theology hostile to that of the Church. By these teachers and others of the same school Neoplatonism was imported into Rome and Athens, where it quickly took firm root and proved a serious danger to Christianity. Theodosius publicly burnt Porphyry's notorious treatise against the Christian religion; but the noxious growth still survived until, in 529, Justinian eradicated it by abolishing the schools of Greek philosophy. Neoplatonism, as taught by Plotinus, borrowed, but grievously misinterpreted,[2] the imaginative description of the human

[1] In passing we may here note that it was not till the tenth or even the eleventh century that Great Pan was truly dead—that the Götterdämmerung had deepened into night and the Olympian gods had fled gibbering to dark places underground. It was only then that Christianity extended itself over such regions as Bulgaria, Hungary, Saxony, Denmark, Scandinavia, and Russia. Irish and early British—and even the Anglican—Christianity was, as we shall see, much earlier.

[2] 'Plotinus refused to permit his picture to be taken, because it would perpetuate the image of a body he deplored, and avoided all mention of

body as the prison-house of the soul which is given by Plato in the *Phaedo*. The contempt and disgust that these false Platonists felt for what St. Francis so affectionately called 'brother ass' doubtless tended to produce, under the influence of Oriental excitability, the insanities of Egyptian and Asiatic asceticism—a result probably far more pernicious than any caused by the bitterest hostility of those who, like Julian the Apostate, openly assailed Christianity, or even of those later Neoplatonists who proclaimed a rival Gospel, bringing forward Pythagoras himself as Antichrist.

It has already been briefly told (p. 5) how Julian came to the throne. As his short reign of about eighteen months is conspicuous for his attempt to re-establish paganism, I shall give some space to its consideration, omitting the much longer reign of the weak, deceitful, and inhuman Constantius as of little consequence in regard to our present subject, except so far as he follows his father's example in matters ecclesiastical, declares for Arianism, persecutes Athanasius at Alexandria, and elects an antipope at Rome, thus causing one of the first of those Roman riots that become of such frequent occurrence.

It will be remembered that Julian was imprisoned and then exiled to Athens by his step-cousin, Constantius. Here he spent six months, studying philosophy, doubtless under Neoplatonic teachers, and indulging his enthusiasm for the art and literature of ancient Greece.[1] Although as early as 351, when a lad at Ephesus, he had secretly received initiation into the mysteries of the ancient Chthonian or Orphic religion, it was probably at Athens that Julian, then about twenty-five years of age, first definitely laid aside his profession of Christianity. In this he had been educated by Eusebius, that notorious Arian bishop whom we have already met at the bedside of the dying Constantine. Eusebius inspired his

the date or locality of his birth, as things too dark and miserable to be remembered' (Archer Butler).

[1] Fellow-students of Julian's at Athens were St. Basil and the learned and eloquent Gregory of Nazianzus (in Cappadocia), afterwards Patriarch of Constantinople, hermit and saint, whose scathing account of Julian's personal character is doubtless due to the Emperor's apostasy.

youthful catechumen with so much zeal that, it is said, he was accustomed to read the lessons in the Cathedral of Nicomedia.

Dramatic events led to his accession. After his recall to Milan, his marriage with the sister of Constantius, and his appointment as Caesar to the prefecture of Gaul and Britain—events which he himself humorously relates, describing his embarrassment at the sudden metamorphosis [1]—he develops great vigour and genius as a commander. He routs the Alemanni near Strasburg and sends their king to Constantius He subjugates the Franks on the Lower Rhine, and then, crossing the river by Mainz, devastates the barbarian lands, rivalling the fame of Marius and Caesar. He rebuilds seven cities between Mainz and the North Sea, and takes up residence at Paris, his 'dear Lutetia,' as he calls it, then a stronghold on the Seine island, connected by wooden bridges with the Campus Martius, the palace, the theatre, and the baths (now the Musée de Cluny) to the south of the river—the 'Quartier Latin' of to-day.

Suddenly, as a bolt from the blue, arrives an order from Constantius (who is dominated by his court officials—mostly eunuchs) that the bulk of the Gallic legions are to march at once—to Persia! The troops forthwith besiege their general in his palatium with tumultuous shouts of 'Julianus Augustus,' and finally raise him on a shield and proclaim him Emperor. He professes great distress; but the fatal word has been uttered and the soldiers are inexorable. He therefore sends word to Constantius, now at Antioch, humbly begging for confirmation of the title. But Constantius furiously demands instant resignation. Then Julian issues the famous proclamation in which he commends his fortune to 'the immortal *gods*,' thus breaking at once his allegiance to the Emperor and to Christianity, and, collecting a large army at Basel,[2] sends forces by different routes into Italy, while he himself with 3000 men

[1] The ceremony of shaving his philosopher's beard and exchanging his Socratic cloak for the military and royal accoutrements of a prince of the Empire amused for a few days, says Gibbon, the levity of the court.

[2] See p. 28, footnote. The name Basilea is first mentioned some years later (374).

plunges through the heart of the Marcian (Black) Forest, reaches the Danube, and in eleven days, on a flotilla that he had seized, arrives at Sirmium and enters Illyricum.

Constantius marches forth from Antioch, vowing to come over and 'hunt' the usurper, *ut venaticiam praedam*; but at Tarsus he dies of fever, and Julian enters Constantinople, where the imperial army declares in his favour, though the eunuchs had set up a rival candidate. He at once gets to work to rescue the court, 'as from the jaws of a many-headed Hydra' (to use his own expression), exterminating multitudinous satellites, spies, informers, eunuchs, and other ministers of luxury and vice. During the few months of his sojourn in the capital he displays the greatest zeal for the revival of the old religion, and, while professing a philosophic tolerance and at times conferring favours on other creeds, he is distinctly hostile [1] to the exclusive claims of Christianity and especially severe against Athanasius as the leader of what he deems the most exclusive and intolerant of all sects. He commands the rebuilding and reopening of all heathen temples, or their restoration from the service of Christ to that of the Olympian deities; he recalls all banished Arian prelates; he abolishes the Christian *labărum* and the Cross; he re-establishes the colleges of augurs and flamens, and as Supreme Pontifex presides at pagan ceremonies; he spends enormous sums on hecatombs offered to the heathen gods, but at the same time he writes an epistle to the Jewish people assuring them that he reverences their 'Great Deity' and will protect them against the 'Galilaeans' who have forsaken the one true God; he even undertakes to rebuild the Temple on Mount Moriah, intending to outrival Solomon himself not only (as Justinian afterwards claimed to have done when he had finished S. Sofia) in the magnificence of the edifice, but also in the number of dedicatory victims—which in Solomon's case amounted to 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep! But it is said that, when excavations were being made for the purpose of laying the

[1] Fragments survive of Julian's *Treatise against the Christians*, composed amid preparations for the Persian War.

3. CONSTANTINE THE GREAT

JULIAN

new foundations of the Temple a violent explosion and earthquake [1] caused such alarm that the work was abandoned.

How far Julian was supported by the genuine paganism or the temporizing apostasy of his subjects it is difficult to learn, for it is as perilous to trust the adulatory records of his friend and adorer, Libanius, the Greek rhetorician and writer (the teacher, by the way, of St. Basil and St. Chrysostom), as to accept the hostile testimony of Gregory of Nazianzus and other ecclesiastic chroniclers. Evidently the enthusiasm of Julian for the old religion was greatly due to his ardent love for ancient art, literature, and philosophy and to the resentful refusal of his mind to submit to the haughty dogmas of a priesthood which regarded the wisdom of Socrates and the art of Homer with equal contempt. But—such is the infirmity of human nature—he himself, a disciple of Plato, a learned scholar, a gifted orator, a remarkable writer of both classical languages, a model of temperance and chastity,[2] fell a prey to the grossest and most foolish superstitions. He was honoured, he believed, by the intimate friendship and the manifest presence of the gods themselves; he consulted them through auguries and oracles and recognized their will in prodigies and their voice in omens.

His enthusiasm for the heroes of classical antiquity induced Julian to compete with Alexander the Great, as he had already attempted to rival the exploits of Caesar in Gaul.[3] Ever since

[1] Probably a fiction invented by Gregory Nazianzen, but recounted by many writers.

[2] 'The splendid and effeminate dress of the Asiatics,' says Gibbon, 'the curls and paint, the collars and bracelets, which had appeared so ridiculous in the person of Constantine the Great, were rejected by the philosophic mind of Julian.' He is said to have generally slept on the ground, even amid the magnificence of the Constantinople palace. His contempt of bodily ease led to indecent neglect of cleanliness. In his *Misopogon* ('The Beard-hater,' *i.e.* the hater of philosophers, a satire against the people of Antioch, who had derided his habits and slovenly appearance) he descants with delight and with pride on the length of his nails and the inky blackness of his hands and his shaggy 'populous' beard.

[3] In his Epistles and Dispatches to the Senate he affects Caesar's style, and is said (by Libanius) to have composed an account of his Gallic wars in imitation of Caesar's *Commentaries*. Most of his writings are in Greek. Our knowledge of his Gallic and Persian campaigns comes mostly from the Latin work of Ammianus.

the days of the Emperor Alexander Severus (*c.* 226) Persia under her Sassanidae kings had given great trouble to the Romans. The present monarch, Sapor (Shapur) II, was the ninth of that great dynasty. He had already reigned more than half a century,[1] and was to live till the fourth year of the reign of Theodosius and to see six Emperors succeed to the throne of the Eastern Empire. He had driven Constantius and the imperial forces out of Mesopotamia, and threatened to expel them from Asia. The campaign of Julian against Sapor, for which vast preparations were made, ended, as we have seen, in his death; and it nearly ended in the annihilation of his army. How Jovian succeeded in rescuing the remnant by an inglorious and disastrous retreat, and how during his short reign he gained the loud acclamations of all his Christian subjects by the re-establishment of their religion and the gratitude of the anti-Arians by the restoration of Athanasius to the patriarchal throne of Alexandria, has been related (pp. 5–6).

During the reigns of Valentinian and Valens, already sketched in the Historical Outline, perhaps the most important incident as regards religion was the conversion of the Visigoths, or the beginnings of their conversion, by Ulfilas (*d.* 381), although by the Trinitarians it was probably regarded as a somewhat Pyrrhic victory for Christianity. Valentinian seems to have been tolerant, or perhaps indifferent, in doctrinal matters, and to have earned respect at first for his manly and temperate character. In his later years, however, his naturally choleric disposition gained the mastery and converted him into a furious tyrant, whose victims were put to death by thousands on charges of treason and of magic.[2]

The hysterical terror caused by a belief in witchcraft produced also on the feeble-minded Valens a similar effect. From the extremities of Asia, we are told, young and old were

[1] He was crowned king before his birth, the Magi placing the crown on his mother's body.

[2] A wave of superstitious dread of witchcraft and books of magic seems at this time to have swept over the Roman world. To such waves is largely due the total destruction of many works of philosophy.

dragged to the tribunal of Antioch, where the Emperor was wont to hold his court. So many were the prisoners that the imperial troops scarce sufficed to guard them, and in outlying provinces the fugitives, it is said, outnumbered the rest of the population.

But Valens did not limit himself to such atrocities. Three years after his accession he had been baptized by the Arian Patriarch of Constantinople. The imperial neophyte soon developed into a bigoted sectarian and a cruel persecutor of 'Athanasian heretics,' as he termed them, and soon the Eastern Empire was in a ferment with tumults. These lasted till at Caesarea Archbishop Basil—once the fellow-student of Julian at Athens and later renowned as hermit and as founder of the only monastic order of the Eastern Church—defied the Emperor, much as St. Ambrose afterwards at Milan defied Theodosius, and with similar success; for we are assured that Valens was so impressed that he swooned in the sight of all the congregation when repelled from the altar and atoned for his cruelties by granting Basil a large estate on which to found a hospital. Valens disappeared, as has been related, in the great battle of Hadrianople in 378.

In the West Valentinian had been succeeded by his son Gratian, a genial and sport-loving youth of sixteen,[1] who accepted as his colleague his four-year-old step-brother, Valentinian II, assigning to the child and his mother Justina the prefecture of Italy, and retaining that of the Gauls for himself. He was still a young man of twenty-four years when he was slain at Lyon by the usurper Maximus, and was apparently far more interested in his deer-forests and bear-preserves than in heretical subtleties, so that during his reign of eight years the early Gallican Church seems to have had respite from sectarian discords, though it did not slumber softly in the arms of orthodoxy (to use Gibbon's phrase), for it actively expended its zeal in destroying the relics of heathen-

[1] Evidently also not without some literary education, for his tutor was one of the last true poets in the Latin language, Ausonius, whom Gratian, or his father, raised to the highest official dignities.

dom and of classic art. At Rome, moreover, Gratian (apparently in conjunction with Justina and her son) seems to have done much to eliminate paganism, for we hear of his suppressing the ancient college of priests, Vestal Virgins, and augurs, and demolishing the images of the gods.[1]

When Valens disappeared Gratian selected as the Augustus of the Eastern Empire a valiant soldier of Spanish birth, Theodosius, who had served in the imperial army in Britain, and had been made Duke of Moesia. The father of Theodosius, after brilliant campaigns in Britain and in Africa, had been executed at Carthage, apparently on some frivolous charge of treason brought against him by Justina. On the disgrace and execution of the elder Theodosius the son had withdrawn to his patrimony in Spain, where he intended to devote himself, like Xenophon or Cincinnatus, to the improvement of his land and to the society of the country folk. Hence after four months he was called by Gratian to fill the throne left vacant by the death of Valens.

For seventeen years (378–395) Theodosius was the real ruler not only in the Eastern Empire but, as patron of the young Valentinian and his mother and as conqueror of Maximus and Arbogast,[2] also in Italy and the far West, although he was undisputedly sole Emperor only for the last year of his reign.

During these seventeen years, which form the subject of the next chapter, paganism died out rapidly, and although we meet later some curious survivals, we may consider that the end of the reign of Theodosius, or the end of the fourth century, brought about the extinction of the old religion in the Empire and left the Trinitarian, or Athanasian, Church—especially the so-called Catholic Church in Italy—in a position of dignity and influence in regard to the civil power.

[1] He first caused consternation among the pagans at Rome by refusing indignantly the office of Pontifex. His zeal for demolishing pagan buildings and images was doubtless fired by the Gallican saints, Hilary of Poitiers and Martin of Tours.

[2] See Historical Outline, p. 8.

CHAPTER IV

THEODOSIUS THE CATHOLIC

THE first duty of the new Emperor of the Eastern Empire was to avenge the defeat of Hadrianople. Before setting out against the Visigoths from Thessalonica, where he had reconstituted the imperial army, Theodosius underwent the rite of baptism and issued to his troops, or perhaps read to the congregation assembled to view the ceremony,[1] the following edict, in the name, it is said, of the three Emperors, Gratian, Valentinian, and himself:[2] 'It is our pleasure that all our subjects adhere to the religion taught to the Romans by St. Peter. . . . According to the teaching of the Apostles and the doctrine of the Gospels, we are to believe in the one Godhead of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, of majesty co-equal in Holy Trinity. We will that the followers of this doctrine be called Catholic Christians, and brand all others with the infamous name of Heretics, and declare that their conventicles shall no longer usurp the name of Churches.' We should note here the assumption of the three temporal lords of the Roman Empire that they possessed the right not only to insist on the acceptation of the Christian religion, but to give their own version of apostolic teachings. Not less than fifteen severe edicts of this nature, directed against heretics, were issued by Theodosius, and enforced with heavy—sometimes with capital—punishment. The office of

[1] Possibly in the circular, domed Church of St. George, the most ancient perhaps of all extant pre-Byzantine churches, dating from 400 or a little earlier.

[2] But the young Valentinian was, like his mother, a zealous Arian at this time; so perhaps the 'our' is the imperial plural.

Inquisitors of the Faith, a name so justly abhorred, was first instituted, it is said, in his reign.[1]

The campaign against the Visigoths, who evaded a general battle, ended in a compact by which the barbarians were allowed to settle south of the Danube as allies (*foederati*) of the Empire on the condition that they should in case of need supply a contingent of 40,000 men. Some twenty years later the last of the Roman poets, Claudian, deplored the existence of this great standing barbarian army as a danger certain to cause the ruin of the Empire; and such it proved, for only six years after Claudian's lament these Visigoths, as we shall see, captured Rome.

In the next year (383) Gratian was slain at Lyon, whither he had fled from Paris—betrayed by his own legions and captured by the cavalry of Maximus the usurper, who had led over from Britain so vast a number of followers that, as has been already said, it was afterwards 'remembered as the emigration of a considerable part of the British nation.' In connexion with this exodus may be mentioned here the legend of St. Ursula, the princess of Brittany, and her eleven thousand British virgins, who are said to have made their way as pilgrims up the Rhine and over the Alps to Rome, and on their return to have been massacred by Huns, or Frisians, near Cologne—where their skulls are yet to be seen.[2] It seems not unlikely (though uncertain dates make it doubtful) that the source of this legend was the fate of a large convoy of British damsels, perhaps under the charge of a lady of Brittany, who were intended as wives for some of the 100,000 followers of Maximus, and who may have been driven by contrary winds into the Rhine, and have fallen into the hands of Salian Franks or savage Frisians—such as some

[1] In passing we may note that the first human victim legally done to death on account of his heretical tenets was a Spaniard, Priscillian, executed by order of Maximus, the usurper who for four years lorded it in Britain and Gaul (see p. 8).

[2] And *yet* some believe that 'XI. M. V.' in the old record only means 'XI martyr virgins'! And other sceptics reduce the eleven thousand to *one* virgin martyr named 'Undecimillia'!

four centuries later killed the great English missionary, St. Boniface.

Had Maximus been content with his usurped Empire of Britain and Gaul and Spain, he might have been known in aftertimes as one of the most successful of Western Emperors, for he ruled a vast realm and possessed a powerful army, levied mainly from the warlike tribes of Germany. Moreover he obtained recognition from Theodosius, who found it prudent to allow his claims to the countries north and west of Italy. But he was led to attack Italy itself, incited perhaps not only by insatiable ambition, but also by the hope, or the certainty, that the Catholic majority among the Italians would gladly shake off the rule of the boy-Emperor Valentinian—or rather that of his mother Justina, who was strongly attached to the Arian heresy in spite of the eloquence and the miracles of the great Bishop of Milan, St. Ambrose. Sending forward a body of troops on the pretence of lending them to Valentinian, the usurper seized the Alpine passes and soon appeared before Milan with a great army.

On his approach Justina fled with her son—now a youth of fifteen years—leaving St. Ambrose [1] to face the enemy. The fugitives reached Aquileia, but, not feeling secure, took ship and, coasting round Greece, arrived after a wearisome voyage at Thessalonica. Here they were visited and welcomed by Theodosius; but the formidable resources of Maximus made the Eastern Emperor hesitate to accede at once to the entreaties of Justina. Soon, however, his hesitation was overcome by the charms of her daughter, the sister of the youth Valentinian, the Princess Galla, already renowned for her youthful beauty, and to become still more renowned as the mother of Galla Placidia, of whom ere long we shall hear so much. Theodosius was a widower, having lost his first wife, the mother of his two sons, some two years before. He determined to marry the young and fascinating princess; and after the wedding he set forth with an army in which there were strong contingents

[1] St. Augustine, now aged thirty-three, and lately converted by St. Ambrose, was baptized by him at Milan in this very year (387).

not only of the Visigoths but also of Huns and of Oriental races.

He found Maximus with his Gallic and German forces on the further banks of the Save,[1] and by a bold frontal attack his cavalry, after swimming the river, put the enemy to flight. Maximus fled to Aquileia, the town near the Adriatic shore which is famous as the scene of so many conflicts, and on the arrival of Theodosius, who seems to have swooped down from the Julian Alps like an eagle after a wounded hare, the usurper was 'dragged from his throne, rudely stripped of the imperial ornaments, the robe, the diadem, and the purple slippers, and conducted like a malefactor to the camp and presence of Theodosius, at a place about three miles distant from Aquileia. The Emperor showed some disposition to pity and forgive the tyrant of the West . . . but the feeble emotion was checked by his regard for public justice and the memory of Gratian, and he abandoned his victim to the pious zeal of the soldiers, who drew him out of the imperial presence and instantly separated his head from his body.'[2]

After this victory Theodosius took up his residence for more than two years (388–91) in Italy, being practically the sole overlord of both the East and the West, though he recognized the rule of Valentinian and Justina (who, however, died soon after her return to Italy). From Milan the two Emperors in the spring of 389 visited Rome, where they made a triumphal entry, and, it is believed, began the erection, on the site of a church built by Constantine, of what was until 1823, when it was burnt, the grandest of all the ancient basilicas of Rome—that of S. Paolo fuori le mura.[3]

In 390 we find Theodosius again in Milan, and it was then that occurred the dramatic scene which we associate with the well-known basilica of S. Ambrogio.

Some three years earlier there had been a serious anti-Catholic and anti-taxation riot at Antioch. The mob had overthrown the statues of the Emperor and his sons and had

[1] Perhaps the decisive battle was fought later on the Drave.
[2] Gibbon, ch. xxvii. [3] See Fig. 4 and explanation.

4. S. Paolo fuori le mura
Rome

dragged them with contumely through the streets. Terrible was the wrath of Theodosius. The city was degraded and chastised, and a great number of prisoners awaited torture and death. But a suppliant petition was sent to Constantinople and—partly by the influence of St. Chrysostom, who has given us a vivid picture of these days and whose wondrous eloquence sustained the despair of his fellow-citizens—the order for the execution was deferred till the answer arrived; and the answer was a general pardon.

But the riot of Antioch doubtless rankled in the mind of Theodosius, and when, in 390, a tumult occurred at Thessalonica, the wealthy naval and military centre of the Macedonian province, the results were far more tragic. The trouble was caused by the imprisonment of a charioteer who was greatly in favour with the public. There was a collision between the populace and the authorities; officials were killed and their bodies ignominiously treated. Theodosius on this occasion rejected all appeals for mercy. He planned a most dastardly and iniquitous revenge. The Thessalonians were led to believe that the incident had been condoned and were invited in the name of the Emperor to an exhibition of games in the Circus, and here they were assailed by armed men and massacred indiscriminately. Seven thousand—some say fifteen thousand—perished. The guilt of this almost incredible atrocity is aggravated by the fact that Theodosius was especially fond of Thessalonica and of its bishop, who some years before had baptized him there, doubtless in the presence of many of these same Thessalonians.

The name of St. Ambrose has already been mentioned. He is known to many as the spiritual father of the elder St. Augustine, as the possible author (with Augustine) of the *Te Deum*, as the writer of noble Latin hymns, and as the inventor of the Ambrosian musical ritual and that system of antiphonal chanting on which, and on the Gregorian modes, the 'plain song' of the Anglican Church is founded.[1] But

[1] 'The Ambrosian chant, with its more simple and masculine tones, is still preserved in the Church of Milan. In the rest of Italy it was superseded

all who know Milan,[1] when they hear the name of St. Ambrose think also of the basilica of S. Ambrogio and its old doors of cypress-wood, although, alas! it is uncertain whether we still possess even the fragments of those doors that were shut in the face of Theodosius the Great.

Ambrose was the son of a prefect of Gaul of noble Roman descent. He was born at Trèves in 340, and became the magistrate of a district that included Liguria and Milan, in which city he was so popular that on the death of the bishop (in 374) he was acclaimed as his successor by the voice of the whole people, and 'to his own surprise and to that of the world,' says Gibbon, 'was suddenly transformed from a governor into an archbishop before he had received the sacrament of baptism.' And well was the choice of the people justified, for there is in the annals of the medieval Church no personality that more strongly appeals to us. It is true that most of us have to put gently aside such stories as that of his dream and the discovery of the sacred skeletons which by their miraculous aid saved him from the wrath of Justina and from exile—even though we may have been shown the bones themselves of Gervasius and Protasius[2] in the crypt of S. Ambrogio. But no one can fail to be impressed by his splendid courage and his noble impulses. In him the Christian Church first stepped forward to champion the cause of justice and humanity against the legalized tyranny of the civil power. His calm defiance of Theodosius was, as Milman says, 'a culminating point of pure Christian influence.' If only the Church had chosen such influence as its sole ideal!

On several occasions Ambrose had already displayed his courage. Once, when Justina had demanded imperiously certain churches in Milan to be given over to the Arians, and had sent her Gothic soldiers to occupy one of these churches,

by the richer Roman chant, introduced by Gregory.' (Milman.) Among the Milanese of the present day the memory of St. Ambrose is kept green especially by the fact that by his permission they are allowed three extra days of Carnevale before Lent.

[1] Or even only Van Dyck's picture in our National Gallery—a small copy of Rubens' fine picture at Vienna.

[2] Four French cathedrals and many churches are dedicated to these saints.

he met them at the church door with his thunders of excommunication and so dismayed them that the queen-regent held it wiser to withdraw her demands.

When Ambrose heard of the Thessalonian massacre he at first retreated into the country and avoided Theodosius. Then, feeling further silence to be cowardly, he sent him a letter in which, in his own name and that of other bishops, he expressed abhorrence of the atrocious deed and added that such blood-guiltiness should betake itself to prayer and penance and not dare to approach the altar, and that he himself had been warned by a vision not to offer the sacrifice of the Eucharist in the presence of one whose hands were stained with the innocent blood of thousands.[1]

Modern scepticism sees in this letter the origin of what it holds to be a picturesque fiction, namely, the tradition that when the Emperor with his retinue approached the portal of the cathedral he found the great wooden doors fast closed against him—or that, as others relate, he found Ambrose himself before the portal, once more defending the house of God from pollution with the thunders of excommunication.[2] Moreover, says the tradition, when Rufinus, the notorious minister of Theodosius, was sent to expostulate and to intimate that his master had the power to force his entrance into the church, the saint undauntedly replied: 'Then he will have to pass over my dead body.'

Whether or not we are to believe this dramatic story, there seems no doubt (for it is attested by Ambrose himself and by Augustine and by others) that on further reflexion, impressed by the courage of Ambrose, and doubtless also influenced by a consciousness of the inhumanity to which he had been impelled by passion, Theodosius did public penance in the cathedral and, attired as a penitent, prostrated himself, repeating the words of the Psalmist: 'My soul cleaveth unto the dust;

[1] This letter is extant (*Ep. Ambr.* 951). We might wish that on this occasion he could have managed without a vision.

[2] This probably took place inside the fine atrium which still (in part at least) exists in front of the narthex (penitents' portico) of the church. Others transfer the scene to the old Basilica Porziana (S. Vittore).

quicken thou me according to thy word.' When we think of this scene and remember the edict issued a few years before by Theodosius in which he arrogated to himself, as if he were both spiritual and temporal overlord, the right to dictate a creed to the Roman Empire and to define the nature of the Trinity, we are conscious that a new and already mighty power had arisen and extended itself with almost incredible rapidity since the day when Constantine first granted protection to the weak and persecuted Church. And when again we think of the Emperor Henry at Canossa, or of Frederick Barbarossa kneeling in the porch of St. Mark's at Venice, how vividly it makes us realize the difference between the motives and ideals of St. Ambrose and those of Hildebrand or Pope Alexander!

In the following year (391) Theodosius returned to Constantinople and entered in triumph through the Golden Gate, which had been erected in his absence to commemorate his victory over Maximus. This gate was afterwards used specially for the state entry of the Emperors. It still exists, and possesses some very fine columns; but it has been blocked up. A tradition is said to persist among the Turks that through this gate some day will enter a Christian conqueror—a contingency that some years ago seemed a possibility, and now (March 1915) seems more possible than ever!

In 392 Valentinian II was found strangled in his bedroom at Vienne. The deed was doubtless committed or instigated by Arbogast, a pagan Frank who had risen to the chief command of the imperial legions in Gaul, and had assumed such a disloyal and insolent attitude that the young monarch, a few days before his murder, had snatched a sword from a soldier and was with difficulty restrained from plunging it into the heart of the traitor. Arbogast, not venturing to assume the purple, proclaimed as Emperor of the West a rhetorician named Eugenius, his former secretary.

Valentinian's sister, Galla, whom Theodosius had married, and for whom he had the deepest affection, urgently incited her husband to avenge the murder of her brother. But

Arbogast had a large army, and in the name of his imperial puppet he had made himself master of Rome and the Western Empire.[1] It was therefore necessary for Theodosius to collect a large force before venturing once more on an Italian campaign. But ere he formed any resolution the pious Emperor, says Gibbon,[2] was anxious to discover the will of Heaven. 'Since the progress of Christianity had silenced the oracles of Dodona and Delphi, he consulted an Egyptian monk, who possessed, in the opinion of the age, the gift of miracles and the knowledge of futurity. Eutropius, one of the favourite eunuchs of the palace of Constantinople, embarked for Alexandria, whence he sailed up the Nile as far as the city of Lycopolis, or of Wolves, in the remote province of Thebaïs. In the neighbourhood of that city, and on the summit of a lofty mountain, the holy John had constructed with his own hands an humble cell, in which he had dwelt above fifty years, without opening the door, without seeing the face of a woman, and without tasting any food that had been prepared by fire or any human art. Five days of the week he spent in prayer and meditation, but on Saturdays and Sundays he regularly opened a small window and gave audience to the crowd of suppliants who flowed from every part of the Christian world. The envoy of Theodosius approached the window with respectful steps, proposed his questions concerning the event of the civil war, and soon returned with a favourable oracle, which animated the courage of the Emperor by the assurance of a bloody but infallible victory. The accomplishment of the prediction was forwarded by all the means that human prudence could supply.'

Ere these preparations were finished Theodosius was afflicted by the loss of his young and beautiful wife, who died in giving birth to her only child, the Princess Galla Placidia. This, however, did not make him relinquish his design, and on September 6, 394, the rival armies met on the river Frigidus,

[1] Ambrose is said to have rejected the gifts of Eugenius and to have withdrawn from Milan till the return of Theodosius.

[2] Accounts are given both by Christian and by pagan writers. Even Dean Milman allows the fact.

not far from Aquileia. For two days the battle raged. Ten thousand of the Gothic auxiliaries of Theodosius [1] perished in vainly assaulting the ramparts of the enemy; but at length, aided by a violent Bora (a storm-wind from the north) and by the desertion of some Gallic troops of Arbogast, the Eastern army put the foe to flight. Eugenius was caught and decapitated. Arbogast, after wandering for several days in the mountains and finding escape impossible, fell on his sword. How Theodosius died four months later at Milan, leaving the Empire to his two sons, Honorius and Arcadius, has been already related (p. 9). It is said that he had ordered a splendid exhibition of Circensian games as a public welcome for Honorius, who was a lad of about ten years, and that he himself was present at the morning performance, but was compelled to absent himself in the afternoon and expired during the following night.

The character of Theodosius seems easily read from his actions; but we cannot feel sure that those actions are always accurately stated and always placed in quite a fair light by contemporary writers. On the one hand we have his eulogists, the Christian Latin poet Prudentius and the Catholic or Trinitarian Fathers, such as Gregory of Nazianzus (*d.* 379), Jerome, Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustine; and on the other the chief chronicler of this period, the pagan Zosimus, a 'partial and malignant historian,' as Gibbon justly says, 'who misrepresents every action of this reign.' But even Zosimus has the grace to allow that Theodosius was 'one of the greatest of the Roman princes,' and in spite of the horror that is excited in our minds by the Thessalonian massacre, not unlike the astonishment and horror with which we read of the persecution of Christians by Marcus Aurelius, we cannot, I think, fail to feel that in his nature, side by side with strange superstitions and savage impulses, there must have been much that was noble and admirable.

[1] This army, commanded partly by the famous Stilicho, was also on this occasion largely reinforced by Visigoths (among whom was the young Alaric) and by Orientals, who 'gazed on each other with mutual astonishment.'

It is, however, more satisfactory to state facts, when one can discover them, than to attempt to analyse character and attribute motives. I shall therefore only add here a few facts connected with the extension of Christianity in this reign and the final extinction of paganism.

Among the numberless incidents, more or less attested, that stand at the service of the historian of Christianity during this period perhaps the one that will best serve our purpose, being typical of many others and indicative of the whole religious movement, is what happened in connexion with a statue of Victory which Julius Caesar brought from Tarentum and erected in the Roman Senate-house—a grand figure with expanded wings and a laurel crown in her outstretched hand. At the altar that stood before this Victory the senators took the oath of allegiance, and on it were offered solemn oblations of wine and incense before the Senate began its deliberations. The statue, together with the altar, seems to have been removed by Constantius, and perhaps sent to adorn Constantinople. The altar was restored by Julian, and again removed by Gratian,[1] restored (*c.* 393) by Eugenius, who was perhaps a pagan, or by Arbogast, who certainly was one, and once more removed by Theodosius shortly before his death, or else by Honorius. Thus during about half a century we can trace the varying fortunes of the battle between Christianity and paganism. Four times were deputations sent by the adherents of the old religion to solicit from various Emperors the restoration of the altar. An interesting account of one of these visits to the imperial court is extant, written by Symmachus, a Roman of noble birth distinguished for his eloquence and for the high office that he had held as pontiff and augur and proconsul of Africa and prefect of Rome. This deputation was sent to the court of Theodosius and Valentinian in Milan, and the rhetoric of Symmachus (who in his oration makes Rome herself plead her own cause before the two Emperors) was met and overcome by the eloquence

[1] Gratian, as we have seen, gave over Italy to Justina and Valentinian. But he seems to have interfered a good deal. See p. 54.

and sarcasm of St. Ambrose, who, as we learn from *his* account, derided the idea of Roman victories having ever been granted by the gods of Olympus, and asked whether Jupiter still spoke by the voice of the legendary geese which saved the Capitol.

But the victory of Ambrose and Christianity on this occasion by no means extinguished paganism. How slowly and with what great difficulty it was eradicated is very evident. In spite of the severe code of Theodosius, which threatened death or confiscation for the treasonable crimes of sacrifice and entrail-divination, in spite too of much ruthless destruction and alienation of the old temples, pagan ceremonies, so modified as to evade the law, continued for many years to be performed both publicly and privately, the hereditary pagan priesthoods continued to be held by the noblest families, and the worship of the sun-god Mithras and of the Great Mother, Cybele, and of other strange deities, continued to defy proscription.

It is stated that on one occasion when Theodosius was in Rome (perhaps on his triumphal visit to the capital with Valentinian in 389) he formally proposed to the Senate the question whether Christ or Jupiter should be accepted as the God of the Romans, and that 'on a regular division of the assembly Jupiter was condemned and degraded by the sense of a very large majority.' But doubtless—if the story be true—the imperial presence accounted for this sudden change of faith, for it is a striking fact that in spite of all the opportunities offered by persecution the pagans did not court martyrdom; they 'desisted with plaintive murmurs,' as Gibbon says, from those rites which in the awe-inspiring presence of their Emperor they had themselves condemned—or, more probably, in many cases, they continued to practise them in secret.

Let us now note how temples disappeared and churches increased. In the reign of Gratian (*c.* 380) there still existed in Rome, it is said, 424 temples devoted to the worship of the ancient deities, while, according to the *Notitia Urbis*, a description of Rome written about this date, there was 'not one Christian church worthy to be named among the edifices of the

city'; and although there certainly did exist some Christian churches, and some of no mean size,[1] these words doubtless give a true picture of their comparative insignificance.

At the end of the reign of Theodosius we find a very different state of things. Theodosius was a Spaniard, in feeling if not by descent, and in Spain orthodox Christianity had become supreme with scarcely an effort, and viewed with equal disdain the present impotence and the past glories of paganism. And if we ask how it was possible that the Romans themselves, both in the mother-city and in the provinces, could have so ruthlessly destroyed the splendid monuments of their ancestors, we may find a sufficient explanation not only in the dangerous encouragement given by such memorials of the pagan Empire and the possibility of another imperial apostate, but also in the horror and dread with which most Christians of these ages, as also in later ages, regarded heathen temples as the haunts of malignant demons [2] and the images of the heathen gods as dangerous fetishes. Indeed, with the average Christian of early days the belief in the actual existence of the old gods

[1] *E.g.* the original edifices of the Lateran Baptistery (*S. Giovanni in Fonte*, where Constantine, as once believed, was baptized by Silvester); *S. Clemente* (of which the present *underground* basilica is probably a reconstruction); the old basilica of *S. Pietro in Vaticano* (in which Charles the Great was crowned in 800), built on the site of the great circus where St. Peter is said to have been crucified; the basilica of *S. Paolo fuori le mura*, first built on the spot where perhaps St. Paul suffered, near the Via Appia; *S. Croce in Gerusalemme*, said to have been built by Helena to receive the True Cross, which she had found at Jerusalem (the superscription is still among the many relics preserved in this church!); *S. Maria Maggiore*, first built by Pope Liberius in 350, and originally called *S. Maria ad Nives* on account of a legend; *S. Pudenzia* and *S. Prassede*, both originally of the second century; *S. Maria in Trastevere*, first built perhaps *c.* 250 and afterwards the first church in Rome dedicated to the 'Mother of God,' whose cult was late; *S. Lorenzo* and *S. Agnese*, both *extra muros* and both perhaps built by Constantine. The church of *S. Costanza* (notable for its ancient mosaics) was at this time the mausoleum of Constantia, daughter of Constantine the Great. It was first dedicated as a church in 1256. Of very early date is *S. Maria Antiqua*, originally the Library of the Palace of Augustus, and lately excavated.

[2] This probably explains the fact that, although many churches were built on the sites and adorned with the marbles of ruined temples, but few temples in Rome (many, however, in Syria and other provinces) were converted into churches. The Pantheon, now the only complete ancient building in Rome, stood unused for many years. It was given by Phocas to the Pope and was dedicated to all the saints in 609 under the name *S. Maria ad Martyres*.

was probably more real than it was in the case of the pagans themselves.

This destruction of ancient shrines and images, against which Libanius, the learned teacher of Chrysostom, vainly protested in his fervid oration *Pro Templis*, was not limited to Rome. The many monuments of classical antiquity [1] which adorned Constantinople had been stolen from Greece and Rome. This was bad enough; but elsewhere innumerable beautiful buildings and works of art were annihilated by monks and other fanatics, who were incited and supported by the edicts of Theodosius and by the commissioners whom he sent to distant provinces to carry out his edicts. The work of vandalism [2] began, it seems, in Syria, where a certain Bishop Marcellus, after demolishing with immense labour the great temple of Zeus in Apamea, attacked with his band of fanatics other towns for a similar purpose until he was seized by the enraged inhabitants and burnt alive. In Gaul the soldier-Bishop of Tours (*c.* 370), the famous St. Martin, to whom some 160 English churches are dedicated, captained great throngs of monks and other zealots from place to place, annihilating all relics of pagan architecture and art in spite of apparitions of the old gods in hostile demon-shapes. In Alexandria, after bloody fighting between the pagans and Christians, the patriarch, the notorious Theophilus, sacked and demolished the huge temple of Serapis, which was regarded as the chief stronghold of Egyptian paganism—and it is possible that

[1] Many splendid columns from ancient temples and many great works of art. One of the most interesting of these was, and still is, the pedestal of the tripod offered by the Greeks to Delphi after the battle of Plataea (see *Ancient Greece*, in this series, p. 272). The *Athene Parthenos* of Pheidias was also taken thither. It was destroyed (1204) by the Latin Crusaders—who proved worse barbarians than the Vandals or Huns had ever done.

[2] I quote, once for all, a demurrer for what it is worth: 'The popular notion, which ascribes to the early Church the wanton destruction of ancient monuments . . . is very far from being justified. . . . Most of the temples were in use in Rome long after the recognition of Christianity . . . and when they were finally closed they were long kept in repair at the expense of the Christian State.' (Lowrie, *Christian Art.*) Gregorovius, however, a great authority, speaking of Gregory the Great, gives Christian fanatics the chief guilt.

5. S. Maria Maggiore
Rome

one of the two great Alexandrian libraries perished with the Serapeum.[1]

While speaking of these distant parts of the Empire in which the old gods—Olympian, Oriental, and Northern—were disappearing before the new religion, I may perhaps mention the early Christian Churches of Britain and Ireland. Into Britain Christianity was first introduced by the Romans, but, of course, not by the papal Roman Church. Of this period hardly anything is known, and we have to content ourselves with little more than legends about St. Alban and St. Helena—unless, indeed, one prefers to treat seriously the old fables about Joseph of Arimathea. But it is certain that great Christian communities, mainly monastic, existed in very early days at various centres, of which Avalon (the Saxon Glastonbury) and Bangor (on the Dee) are the most famous.[2]

Not many years after Stilicho had withdrawn the Roman legions from Britain (*c.* 405) Christianity was almost extirpated from the country by the Angles and the Saxons, and the Irish Church was cut off from Christendom for about 150 years by a wedge of savage paganism. We shall see later how these Angles and Saxons were converted by the younger St. Augustine (*c.* 600), the missionary sent by Gregory the Great. The remnants of the ancient British Church held out, it is said, obstinately against the papal supremacy proclaimed by Augustine, professing the jurisdiction of their own Bishop of Avalon (Glastonbury); and a sinister tradition accuses the saint (falsely, we may hope, as Augustine died in 604) of having incited the terrible massacre of the monks of Bangor when the Britons were routed by the Saxons near Chester in 607. The extraordinary missionary zeal in a somewhat later

[1] Probably neither was the original library of the Ptolemies. One was burnt by the Arabs in 651.

[2] From Britain proceeded St. Patrick, to whom the conversion of Ireland is mainly accredited. He was born in North Britain; captured by Irish pirates; a slave six years in Ireland; escaped to Gaul, where he was apparently under St. Martin of Tours; returned (*c.* 432) through Britain, probably *via* Bangor (Iscoed), to Ireland. Note that neither the ancient Irish nor the British Church can be proved to have been founded by the papal Roman Church. There was probably Christianity in Ireland before St. Patrick's day.

age both of the ancient Irish and the younger Anglo-Saxon Church will be described when we reach the days of the later Lombard kings and of Charles the Great.

That sublime and simple precepts and doctrines should in course of time suffer from gross and grotesque caricature seems due to incorrigible tendencies of human nature, and if in the case of Christianity such results are especially painful and astounding, we must seek whatever consolation we can find in the words—perhaps of Gregory the Great—*corruptio optimi pessima*, or in Shakespeare's version, 'Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.' It lies, of course, far beyond my scope to trace in detail the evolution of medieval religion [1] in Italy, but I shall attempt to point out certain striking religious phenomena which appeared in the period that we are considering and which strongly influenced the course of Italian art and Italian history.

Of these remarkable phenomena I select two, namely, the superstitious veneration paid to 'relics,' and the almost incredible enthusiasm excited by the ascetic, or anchoret, movement.

Reverence felt for the relics of what in its day has been great or beautiful is of course an admirable emotion, differing totally from mere antiquarian enthusiasm. But the medieval veneration for so-called sacred relics was founded on, or very closely combined with, a superstitious belief in the miraculous properties of such relics, and involved a fetish-worship quite as gross as that of the older religion.[2]

[1] A subject that connects itself with this theme is, of course, the assimilation by the Church of external features of pagan cults and rituals—a matter that will force itself on our attention when we arrive at the unsuccessful attempt to prevent the revival of image-worship. In passing, one may note such revivals of old superstitions as the so-called coat of St. John, shaken out at the door of the Lateran Church to bring rain in times of drought—perhaps with the same success that attended the *lapis manalis* of ancient Rome or that nowadays attends the arts of the African rain-doctor.

[2] Even in prehistoric Cretan shrines have been found fetish objects that point towards belief in miraculous cures, such as models of hands, feet, etc.—evidently thank-offerings like those still seen in Roman Catholic churches. In Grecian history we find much of this nature connected with the Orphic and other mysteries. See, too, the stories about the Aeacid idols of Aegina (e.g. *Ancient Greece*, in this series, p. 221).

Doubtless some genuine relics did exist, but the demand became so important that innumerable new discoveries were made, often (as in the case of St. Ambrose already mentioned) aided by dreams and visions; and the supply that met the demand was enormous. The True Cross, discovered on Calvary by Helena, afforded, it is said, enough wood to build a warship—a fact that led to the fabrication of a legend affirming its 'vegetative,' or self-renewing, powers. Astounding stories of the miracles effected by bones and hair and drops of blood, and sacred oil, and many other objects, were spread abroad, and increased still more the demand. Every town longed to possess some such treasure. No church was built until some relic [1] had been secured.

The origins of the great ascetic movement may be sought in the far East, where the Indian fakir and the Thibetan monk and other such *lusus naturae* seem to have existed from time immemorial; or perhaps it is more correct to say that the tendency to such aberrations, which seems to be latent in the Oriental character, generated such results as the Jewish anchorets of the Dead Sea, the Essenes, and the Egyptian Therapeutae, whose monasteries preceded those of the Christians by many years, and that the first movement among the

[1] About 750 (in the pontificates of the brothers Stephen II and Paul I) long lines of wagons, says Gregorovius, used to bring constantly into Rome from the Campagna and the Catacombs immense quantities of skulls and skeletons, which the Popes sorted, labelled, and sold for exportation. It should be noticed, however, that the spoliation of tombs and the breaking up of bodies into smaller relics for exportation and sale to pilgrims had little vogue at Rome till about the eighth century. Early churches were built over the tombs of martyrs, and great care was taken not to disturb the tomb, which was often visible through a lattice in the high altar—the 'window of confession.' Handkerchiefs, etc., placed in contact with the tomb became charged with the miraculous powers of genuine relics. They were called 'brandea' and used for exportation.

In the greatest book of the early Christian Church, the *De Civitate Dei*, St. Augustine asserts that innumerable miracles were effected in Africa by such 'brandea' from the tomb of St. Stephen, whose body had been discovered (by a vision) near Jerusalem. In his own diocese, he affirms, more than seventy miracles took place by such means, including three resurrections from the dead; also the trade in sacred oil (from the lamps burning before the tombs of saints) was very great. Over seventy little vials (*ampullae*) of miracle-working oil were secured by Theodelinda for her Monza Cathedral, and some of them are still there. See Fig. 20 and explanation.

Christians of Egypt and Syria was, partly at least, due to the influence of Neoplatonic philosophy, the eccentricities of which have been noted.

About the year in which Constantine the Great assumed the purple (305) a youthful religious enthusiast known as Antony of the Thebaïs, in Egypt, retired to a solitary life in the desert. His example was soon followed, and ere long many thousands of fanatics, who called themselves desert-men (eremites), or recluses (anchorets), began to people the great sandy and rocky wastes of the Nile country, until it was believed that their number equalled the population of all the towns and cities of Egypt. It is needless to attempt any description of the well-known horrors and insanities of anchoretism, and useless to waste astonishment over this monstrous parasitic growth which threatened the very existence of Christ's religion The solitary system in course of time proved almost impossible. The cell of every well-known hermit was surrounded by the huts or cells of his adorers; a 'solitary' of Gaza, Hilarion, is said to have had a retinue of nearly three thousand; and ere long an anchoret named Pachomius found it more consonant with the precepts of the Gospel to gather together—perhaps on an island of the Nile—about fourteen hundred of his fellows as 'coenobites' (dwellers together), whom he formed into a monastic establishment—not, of course, a monastic Order, such as Benedict founded later. Monasteries now became very fashionable, and the fashion spread with great rapidity through the whole of Christendom, from the deserts of Syria, Egypt, and Ethiopia [1] to the wilds of Gaul and Britain, where the life of the solitary desert recluse was rendered by the climate difficult of imitation, and a more humanized form of asceticism took permanent root.

Antony had gained the friendship of Athanasius (who afterwards wrote his life), and about the year 340 the Alexandrian patriarch introduced to the Pope at the Vatican some of Antony's disciples. The strange and savage appearance of

[1] Abyssinian monasteries still obey a 'rule' said to be very similar to that of Antony or Pachomius.

these 'Egyptians,' we are told, excited at Rome first horror, then disdain, then enthusiastic imitation. Senators and noble matrons vied with each other in turning their splendid palaces and villas into monasteries, and the Church soon realized that it must adopt and cherish the new movement. In the East S. Basil, himself once a solitary, was a zealous founder of religious houses; St. Martin of Tours, the exterminator of pagan temples, or perhaps his patron St. Hilary of Poitiers, was the founder of the earliest monasteries in Gaul; in Britain, as we have seen, there were in the fifth century, if not earlier, great monastic institutions at Avalon and Bangor (Iscoed).

We have wandered of late rather far from Italy; but a clear realization of the immense strength of some of these religious currents will allow us perhaps to hold on a better course our *piccioletta barca.*

CHAPTER V

STILICHO, ALARIC, AND PLACIDIA

395–450

WE have seen (p. 9) that Theodosius the Great divided the Empire between his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius, aged respectively eighteen and ten years, and appointed Rufinus and Stilicho as their guardians. The former presided, at Constantinople, over the imperial finances, and acted as guardian of the youth Arcadius, while Stilicho had the child Honorius under his charge and was *magister utriusque militiae* (commandant of both the cavalry and the infantry), having his headquarters at Rome.[1] The odium incurred by the extortion of taxes on the one hand and, on the other, the advantages possessed by a popular commander of the imperial army soon brought it about that the rivalry of the two regents should end in the extinction of Rufinus, whose murder by Stilicho's Gothic troops has been related.

In this chapter, after giving a few details about Stilicho and his remarkable career (395–408), I shall relate some of the many picturesque incidents connected with the invasion of Alaric and the fortunes of Galla Placidia, trusting that the framework of facts given in the Historical Outline will help to keep all in a fairly lucid order.

It will be remembered that great multitudes of Visigoths had been allowed to settle south of the Danube, and we have heard several times of their supplying very large contingents to the imperial armies. The Gothic soldier who murdered

[1] The two halves of the Empire were not yet distinctly separate. See Coin Plate I, 10, where the two Emperors sit side by side,

Rufinus in the presence of the Emperor Arcadius, at a review near Constantinople, had exclaimed as he stabbed his victim: 'With this sword Stilicho smites thee'—words fraught with significance, for it was Gothic swords which were now to decide the fate of the Empire. Ere long these Gothic troops, whose captain, Gainas, was devoted to Stilicho, became dominant at Constantinople; but finally a serious tumult having been caused, incited partly by St. Chrysostom, the patriarch, who was naturally hostile to these insolent Arian barbarians, they were driven from the city. Gainas was killed by the Huns while trying to cross the Danube, but his men rejoined their fellows, the Visigoths of Thrace and Moesia.

These Visigoths were now beginning to prove very troublesome. For the last five years (since about 395) they had been under the rule of Alaric, of whom we have already heard at the battle on the Frigidus, where, as a young man, he fought for Theodosius against Arbogast. Alaric's restless and dangerous hordes the crafty Rufinus had tried, it is said, to incite against Stilicho and the Western Empire, in order to avert the peril from the Eastern capital. Stilicho too (himself a Vandal) had used them against Rufinus; but he had then opposed and defeated Alaric in the Peloponnese when he invaded Greece.[1]

Excited and incensed by such unwise treatment, the Visigoths determined to move once more southwards and now decided on the invasion of Italy as being likely to prove the most easy and profitable undertaking. What the real object of Alaric was, one cannot say. He, as afterwards Odovacar and Theoderic, had a superstitious reverence for the Empire, and probably the idea of seizing the imperial power never entered his imagination. The chief task imposed upon him was evidently that of providing a new home for the excited multitudes who looked to him for guidance, and who doubtless fiercely demanded plunder. Also, if we are to trust a tradition handed down by the poet Claudian, Alaric was urged Rome-wards by a voice which constantly promised him that he should some day

[1] In this invasion Alaric took, but did not pillage, Athens, though he probably burnt the celebrated temple at Eleusis.

reach the Eternal City: *Penetrabis ad Urbem!* At first, however, he met once more his master in Stilicho.

After defeating Alaric in Greece (396) Stilicho had further distinguished himself by crushing a rebellion in Africa which had been incited by a Moorish chieftain, Gildo. He himself, though a Vandal, was married to the niece and adopted daughter [1] of the great Theodosius, the Spanish lady Serena, whose beauty and virtues are extolled in a poem by Claudian About 399 their daughter Maria was wedded to her half-idiotic and cold-blooded cousin, the Emperor Honorius, and Stilicho thus became still more powerful.[2]

His splendid defence of Italy against the Visigoths under Alaric and against the vast horde of Rhaetian barbarians under the savage Woden-worshipper Radegast, whom he captured and slew at Fiesole, has been already briefly described (pp. 10, 32). Here I shall note one or two occurrences which are of importance from a higher point of view than that of the chronicler of wars and politics.

When Stilicho and Honorius entered Rome in triumph in 404, after the defeats of the Goths near Turin and Verona, a great gladiatorial show was given in the Colosseum—for even yet, a century after the Peace of the Church, in spite of the protests of nobler natures (such as the poet Prudentius), and in spite of several partial prohibitions by some of the Emperors, such atrocities were still frenetically applauded in the city that claimed to be the centre of the Christian world, although in Constantinople they had been abolished, or had never been known,[3] and although Theodosius the Catholic had already

[1] See geneal. table p. 20 'An old inscription gives Stilicho the singular title of *pro-gener D. Theodosii.*' (Gibbon.) Singular enough; for *progener* means one's *grand*daughter's husband. Gibbon writes (xxix) as if Serena were wedded to Stilicho when she was a 'princess' at Constantinople, viz. *after* 395. If so, Maria married Honorius when she was about four years of age—rather too young perhaps, though he was only fourteen.

[2] Note that also Rufinus in Constantinople had tried to marry *his* daughter to his ward, Arcadius, but had been outwitted by the eunuch officials, who substituted the daughter of a Frank general, Eudoxia, afterwards the 'Jezebel' denounced by St. Chrysostom.

[3] Constantine the Great in the same year as that of the Council of Nice issued an edict disapproving of these spectacles in 'time of peace.' Even

(in 394) suppressed even such innocent pagan amusements as the Olympian games.

If we may trust the writer Theodoret, this gladiatorial show was the last which ever took place in the Empire. A monk from the East had travelled all the way to Rome for the purpose of protesting by some act of daring against these brutal exhibitions, and beneath the tiger-gaze of the many thousands of excited spectators who, tier upon tier, fill the vast spaces of the Colosseum he rushes across the arena and parts the combatants. With a roar of indignation the whole amphitheatre demands his death—and he sinks overwhelmed by a tempest of missiles. But his prayer is granted. His splendid act of courage has so deeply impressed the spectators that their fury gives place to admiration and to veneration; and Honorius, it is said, issued a proclamation abolishing for ever these human combats.[1] The monk, Telemachus, has been sainted, but certainly he has not received due recognition in art or otherwise. Perhaps this is because the story is a little doubtful—although by no means so doubtful as that of many a popular saint—or else because he only died for humanity, not for a theological dogma.

The campaigns of Stilicho are the theme of Claudian's 'servile muse,' as it is perhaps rather unjustly called by Gibbon. Claudian wrote both in Greek (being a native of Alexandria) and in Latin, but except for a few Greek epigrams his fame[2] rests on his Latin poems, especially on the fine poem in Latin hexameters describing the *Gothic War*, called

this is a proof of a vast change in his sentiments, for before his adoption of Christianity he had in the arena at Trèves (Trier) exhibited so many of his barbarian captives that they 'tired out by their multitude the ravening wild beasts.' Cicero tells us that even in his days such shows seemed 'cruel and inhuman to some people'; but he defends them (*Tusc.* ii, 12), as many nowadays defend war, as a fine discipline and school of manly virtue.

[1] Fights between wild beasts still continued, but seem to have been suppressed by the 'barbarian' Theoderic and other Gothic, Lombard, and Frank conquerors, who substituted tournaments. In the East they were forbidden by a Council about 700. Bull-fights are one of the most revolting and contemptible relics of such savagery.

[2] He also wrote the *Praise of Serena*, *The War against Gildo*, various political poems and many epigrams, and the hymeneal hymn for Honorius and Maria.

by him the *Getic War*; for, as we shall see was also the case with the later writers Cassiodorus and Jordanes, the Goths were falsely believed to be identical with the 'Getae,' who were Thracians or Dacians of classical times. Claudian's poetry reminds one of the splendid colouring of the later Venetian painters, or of Rubens. It is to a great extent free from the turgidity and extravagance of Lucan, with whose *Pharsalia* we are naturally inclined to compare the *Getic War*, and if we consider that Latin was not Claudian's mother-tongue—for he tells us himself that he first 'drank of Roman fountains,' and first wrote Roman verse, in 395—we cannot but be astonished at the wonderful ease and vigour of his style and at the occasional soarings of the imagination which lift him for the moment almost to the side of Virgil and Lucretius.

A most interesting episode in the campaigns of Stilicho is his relief of Florence when it was besieged by Radegast and his motley host of barbarians in 405, for it is perhaps the earliest important event of which we have any full account connected with medieval Florence—if we can regard Florence of the year 405 as already medieval.

Florence was probably first founded by the Etruscans of Faesulae (Fiesole), relics of whose huge walls still exist. In later classical times it was a Roman military colony of some importance, and was perhaps refounded, or expanded and re-fortified, by Julius Caesar. When this scene took place at the beginning of the fifth century it seems to have been four-square, like most Roman *castra*, and to have possessed a citadel, forum, amphitheatre, and temples—one of which was dedicated to the three divinities, Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, and another to Mars,[1] the tutelary deity of the city—this last building being perhaps the original edifice of what later was Dante's *bel San Giovanni* and now is the Baptistery. As this siege is mentioned neither by Machiavelli nor in ordinary

[1] See Dante, *In,*. xiii, 143, and *Par.* xvi, 47. And for the old statue of Mars, famous for its connexion with the great Florentine feud, and known by all who know the Ponte Vecchio see *Par.* xvi, 145.

accounts of Florence, it may be well to give here what Gibbon says: 'The siege of Florence by Radagaisus [Radegast] is one of the earliest events in the history of the celebrated republic. . . . Florence was reduced to the last extremity, and the fainting courage of the citizens was supported only by the authority of St. Ambrose [who had died some eight years before and] who communicated in a dream the promise of a speedy deliverance. On a sudden they beheld from their walls the banners of Stilicho, who advanced to the relief of the faithful city'—and ere long enclosed and besieged the besieging barbarian host, encamped on the 'dry and stony ridge' of Faesulae, as it is called by Orosius.[1] 'The method of surrounding the enemy with strong lines of circumvallation, which Stilicho had twice employed against the Gothic king, was repeated on a larger scale . . . and the imprisoned multitude of horses and men was gradually destroyed by famine rather than by the sword. . . . A supply of men and provisions was introduced into the walls of Florence and the famished host of Radagaisus was in its turn besieged. The proud monarch of so many warlike nations was reduced to confide either in the faith of a capitulation or in the clemency of Stilicho. But the death of the chieftain, who was ignominiously beheaded, disgraced the triumph of Rome and of Christianity. The famished Germans were sold as slaves. . . . Stilicho informed the Senate and the Emperor of his success and deserved a second time the glorious title of Deliverer of Italy.'

The reasons that led to the fall and death of Stilicho were manifold. For several years his enemies had spread the accusation that after defeating Alaric he had favoured his escape, both in Greece and also in Italy, and had even agreed to acknowledge him as the governor of the prefecture of Illyricum; and the charge, which was possibly true, was

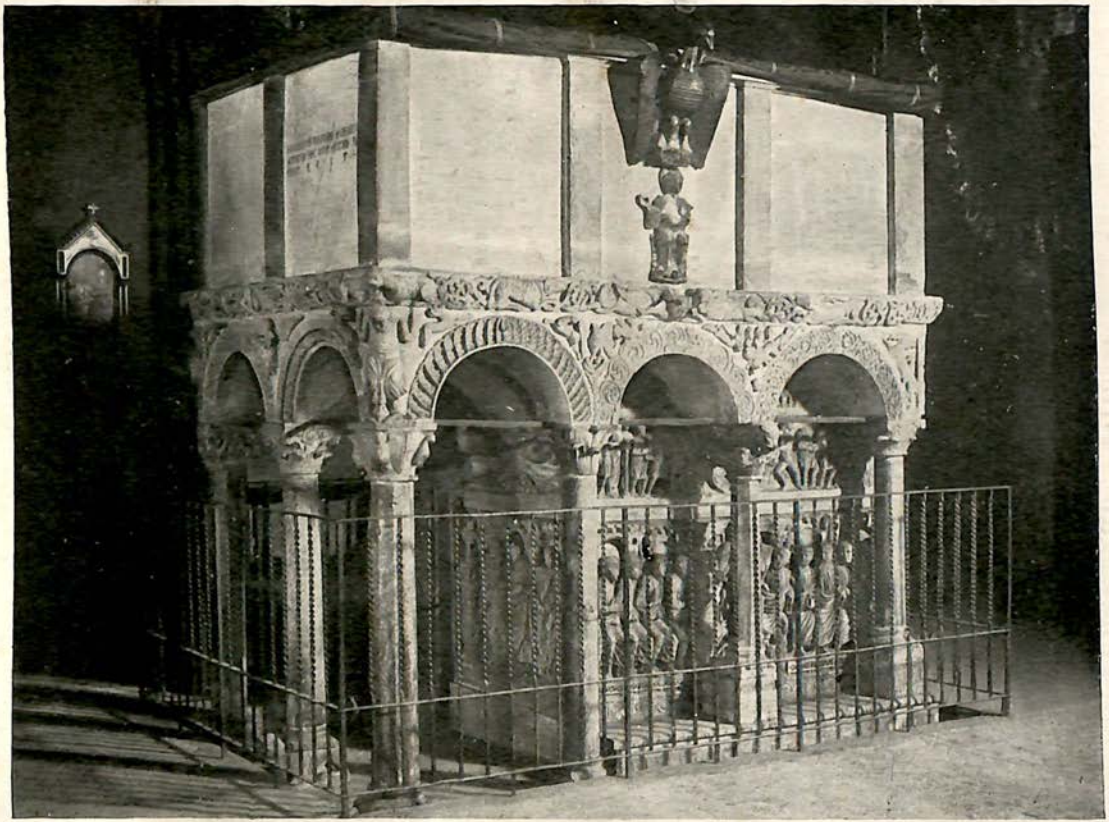
[1] The Spaniard Orosius (author of seven books of history in defence of Christianity) and his friend St. Augustine wrote, when they were together in Africa, an account of this siege. See *De Civitate Dei*, v, 23. Dante alludes to Orosius probably when he speaks of 'him from whose Latin Augustine drew supplies' (*Par.* x, 120).

rendered all the more difficult to repel since he himself was a barbarian by birth, and as such was suspected and disliked by the Roman part of the army, as also by both the nobles and the commons of Rome. Honorius, too, ere long began to suspect him, and, being childless himself, was the more ready to listen to the rumour that the all-powerful general hoped to place his son Eucherius—who claimed blood-relationship with the great Theodosius—on the throne of the Western or the Eastern Empire.[1] Another charge was founded on the undeniable, though perhaps necessary, withdrawal of imperial troops from Britain and Gaul, in consequence of which the Rhine had been crossed by great hordes of savages, and amidst the panic and disorder a dangerous 'tyrant,' Constantine, had arisen in Britain and made himself master of Gaul and Spain.

All these accusations were fomented by a rival of Stilicho's, an officer of the imperial guard named Olympius, who stirred up serious revolt among the troops stationed at Pavia. The city was sacked, the friends of Stilicho were massacred, and Honorius, who was present, made no effort to save them. When Stilicho, who was at Bologna, learnt this he hastily withdrew to Ravenna and sought sanctuary in a church—evidently, I think, the cathedral, the Basilica Ursiana,[2] the ancient campanile of which is still standing. A troop of soldiers—sent by Olympius, or perhaps by Honorius himself—soon appeared at the door of the church. The bishop was induced by false promises to urge Stilicho to surrender himself. But no sooner had Stilicho crossed the threshold than he was arrested, and, after restraining those of his friends who were eager to attempt a hopeless rescue, he offered his neck to the swords of his assassins. In the basilica of

[1] Arcadius, the Eastern Emperor, died May 1, 408, and Stilicho on August 23. Rumour said that Stilicho had planned to proclaim Eucherius in the place of Arcadius' son, Theodosius II. Note that Maria had died and that Stilicho had managed to marry his second daughter, Thermantia, to Honorius.

[2] Built by Bishop Ursus before 396; demolished *c.* 1734 to make room for the present Duomo. The old campanile is probably Ursian. Close to the campanile stands the famous Baptistery of the Orthodox, which in Stilicho's day was probably still a Roman bath. See Fig. 10 and explanation.



6. PULPIT, S. AMBROGIO, MILAN
With so-called Tomb of Stilicho

S. Ambrogio in Milan there is, beneath the old Romanesque pulpit, a sarcophagus which for many centuries has gone by the name of the tomb of Stilicho—but modern antiquarians tell us that it dates from the sixth century (see Fig. 6).

The death of Stilicho was followed by a murderous persecution of his adherents. His son Eucherius attempted to escape, but was caught and killed. Thermantia was divorced. Serena, being the cousin of Honorius, was granted reprieve, but her fate was not long delayed, as we shall see. Claudian, like Milton at the Restoration, was for a time in hiding and indited pitiable (if they are not ironical) recantations of his former scathing political epigrams. We hear no more of him. His fate is unknown.

Honorius very soon discovered that by his murder of Stilicho he had, as it were, cut off his own right hand. Surrounded by his incapable and trembling satellites, he shut himself up in Ravenna, the marshes and haven of which city so often in the days of barbarian invasion offered a secure defence landwards and an easy escape seawards. Here the half-witted and malicious youth, now twenty-three years of age, but wholly stunted in mind and devoid of natural affections, occupied himself with his poultry-yard while Alaric was beleaguering Rome. When the Visigoth king sent envoys, the Pope among them, to propose peace on the quite reasonable condition that Noricum (Carinthia, Styria, etc.) should be handed over to the Visigoths, he repelled them with fretful disdain; and when the news was brought that Rome had been taken by Alaric he is said to have exclaimed: 'Impossible! Why, only quite a short time ago I was feeding it with my own hands'—for to him the only 'Rome' of any importance was one of his hens, to which he had given that name.

A tragic event that happened when Alaric first besieged Rome was the murder by the Romans of Serena, widow of Stilicho and cousin and mother-in-law (twice over) of Honorius. She was accused, as her husband had been, of favouring Alaric. Rumour attributed her death to the influence or information of her cousin, the still youthful princess, Galla

Placidia; but there are many reasons for believing that rumour lied.

When Honorius rejected the proposals of Alaric [1] and the siege of Rome was renewed (409) the sufferings of the people were terrible. The accounts make one recall the sieges of Jerusalem and Numantia as related in the pages of Josephus and Livy, or the not less harrowing scenes from the Ostrogothic war which we shall find later depicted by Procopius. Men and women were murdered secretly and devoured; even mothers killed and ate their children. Driven at last to despair, the Romans threatened to sally forth *en masse* and overwhelm their besiegers; but Alaric, hearing of this, laughed aloud, it is said, and exclaimed: 'The thicker the crop, the easier it is to mow.' And when, feeling the truth of the sarcasm, they wished to learn the terms of the victor, he demanded *all* the gold and silver and movables of value and all the foreign slaves in the city. 'What then will you leave us, O king?' exclaimed the envoys. 'Your lives,' was the answer. But Alaric's bark was worse than his bite. He accepted a more reasonable *Brandschatz*, and for a time there was truce.

In the intervals between his three sieges of Rome Alaric exercised no little influence on the political state of the city. His demands for enormous sums of money had caused great spoliation of temples and other ancient treasures, so that the animosity of the still very numerous pagans [2] against the Christians was greatly embittered. Taking advantage of this religious feud and that of the Arians against the Catholics,

[1] Some of these incidents are referred sometimes to the *first* siege. For Rome and its people at this epoch see Gibbon's picturesque descriptions (ch. xxxi) or Gregorovius' great work on Rome in the Middle Ages. The population may have been about two millions, and the exodus at this time was enormous. St. Jerome tells us that all the East was filled with fugitives from Rome.

[2] Rome seems to have appealed largely to the old gods to help her against the Christian (Arian) barbarian Alaric. See p. 25. Zosimus, the 'malignant pagan historian' of whom we have already heard, asserts that even the Pope was in favour of permitting Etruscan magicians to try their arts by which they undertook to draw down lightning from heaven (like Numa) and direct it against the barbarians—an anticipation perhaps of artillery.

and finding himself, as master of the port of Ostia, able to dictate terms to the terrified Romans, Alaric even succeeded in procuring the election of the Prefect of Rome, Attalus by name, as a rival Emperor. Amidst tumultuous excitement of the Roman populace Gothic troops were allowed to enter the city and conduct the new Emperor to the imperial residence on the Palatine. All Italy except Ravenna and Bologna, seemed to acclaim its new master. Alaric accompanied him almost to the gates of Ravenna, and Honorius offered to divide the Western Empire with his rival—an offer that Attalus disdainfully rejected, offering in return to allow Honorius to spend the rest of his days in exile on some remote island. But the goddess of fortune interfered. Auxiliaries from Africa arrived at the port of Ravenna, and Alaric suddenly withdrew his favour from Attalus and stripped him on the plain of Rimini, before the whole army, of the imperial insignia,[1] which he sent to Honorius, offering again terms of peace. Honorius and his ministers, however, once more refused to entertain Alaric's overtures, and the Gothic king returned to Rome, determined to revenge the insult by allowing his army to sack the city.

But when at last, in 410, Alaric and his Visigoths entered Rome —the Porta Salaria having been opened, it is said, by traitors or slaves—he is said to have remained in the city only a few days, and he showed far more clemency and magnanimity than one might have expected. The Christian churches, such as the old Vatican basilica of S. Pietro and the splendid, newly built basilica of S. Paolo, were respected by him, as also was the right of sanctuary. Doubtless the bloodshed and pillage were considerable, and many citizens were enslaved; but the damage done by these barbarians to buildings and works of art was incomparably less than that accomplished in Constantinople by the French and Venetian 'Crusaders' in 1204, or in Rome itself by the Spanish Catholics and German Lutherans of Constable Bourbon in 1527.

The story of the death and burial of Alaric is well known,

[1] For the later rather melodramatic fortunes of Attalus see p. 86 and *n*.

but why he so suddenly withdrew from Rome—what was his object in hastening to the southernmost shores of Italy—what plans of further conquest induced him to collect vessels—whether it was Sicily or Africa that he had in view, and where he hoped to find that home for his Visigoths which he was for ever seeking, and which they ultimately found in Gaul—are questions impossible to answer with any certainty. According to Gibbon, his attempt to transport a part of the army across the Strait of Messina was foiled by a tempest, and his designs, whatever they may have been, were frustrated by his sudden death. 'The ferocious character of the barbarians,' Gibbon adds, 'was displayed in the funeral of the hero. By the labour of a captive multitude they forcibly diverted the course of the Busentinus [Busento], a small river that washes the walls of Consentia [Cosenza, in Calabria]. The royal sepulchre, adorned with the splendid spoils and trophies of Rome, was constructed in the vacant bed; the waters were then restored to their natural channel, and the secret spot [1] where the remains of Alaric had been deposited was for ever concealed by the inhuman massacre of the prisoners who had been employed to execute the work.'

Athaulf, or Adolf, the brother of Alaric's wife, took command of the Visigoth army. Of the motives that caused him to desist from hostility against Honorius and Italy a very interesting picture is given us by St. Augustine's friend, the historian Orosius, who when on a visit to St. Jerome in Palestine met a pilgrim from Narbonne who had been a companion in arms of the barbarian chief. At first, we are told, Athaulf had intended to make himself Augustus and to set up a 'Gothia'—a Gothic Empire—in the place of the 'Romania.' But he had become convinced that so wild and intractable were the Goths that they could hope for no permanent state except one founded on the laws and subordinate to the constitution of the Roman Empire. He seems to have had no hope, such as Theoderic afterwards vainly attempted to realize, that a new nation and

[1] Tradition locates it at the junction of the Busento with the main stream of the Crati (famous as the river of ancient Sybaris).

new constitution might be built up out of barbarian and Roman elements. Possibly also personal motives induced him to adopt a Roman policy, for he had fallen in love with one of his Roman captives—the half-sister of Honorius, the youthful Galla Placidia, who—*matre pulchrâ filia pulchrior*—had inherited her beauty from her mother Galla and from her grandmother Justina.[1] Honorius would not consent to the union of an imperial princess with a barbarian, but being at the time hard pressed by the 'tyrant' Constantine, of whom we have heard, and a usurper named (once more) Maximus, who had mastered Spain, he was glad to rid Italy of the Visigoths. Athaulf and his army were therefore able to pass unimpeded through the whole length of the peninsula and to enter Gaul, under the condition that they should help to reconquer the western provinces for Honorius. Meantime, although Maximus had been crushed and Constantine had been captured at Arles and sent to Ravenna by a valiant general of Honorius named Constantius, a third usurper had sprung up. He was attacked and slain by Athaulf and his head was sent to Honorius, who forwarded it to Carthage in order to demonstrate to that somewhat disloyal city what fate was to be expected by rebels. But in spite of such gruesome presents Honorius still refused to sanction the marriage, and offered to send a very large quantity of grain to the Visigoths, who were in great need of food, if Athaulf would renounce the fair Placidia. This offer, however, fell through, so Athaulf determined to take a bold step. He made himself master of the cities of Narbonne, Toulouse, and Bordeaux, and even tried to capture Marseille from the imperial troops, commanded by Boniface—of whom we shall hear much a little later. Then he celebrated his wedding with his by no means reluctant lady-love at Narbonne.[2] 'The marriage,' says Villari, 'was solemnized with

[1] Jordanes extols her beauty; but Gibbon remarks on the 'expressive silence of her flatterers.' Her coins give little information that can be relied upon (see Plate I, coin 11).

[2] Jordanes, who gives a graphic description of the marriage in his *History of the Goths*, makes it take place at Forli (or at Imola), in Italy. But that may have been the betrothal, for the chief ceremony seems to have been

genuine Roman pomp and ceremony. . . . The barbarian Athaulf wore a Roman tunic. Before the bride, who was decked out in splendid Roman attire, knelt fifty youths, each of whom held two golden basins, one filled with pieces of gold, the other with jewels and other precious things—spoils from the sack of Rome. And to add solemnity to the ceremonial Latin verses were recited—the impressive [1] effect being heightened by the fact that this hymeneal song was declaimed by Attalus, the mock-Emperor, whom Alaric had elected and soon afterwards deposed.'

Not long after the wedding, which took place in January 414, Athaulf led strong bodies of his Visigoths across the Pyrenees, thus invading the territory of the Vandals, Suevi, and Alani, who (as we saw in ch. ii.) had occupied the greater part of Spain and had by their devastations caused most terrible famines, accompanied by outbreaks of pestilence. At Barcelona Athaulf was assassinated. His successor—possibly his murderer—Singeric, who detested the Roman name, treated Galla Placidia with contumely, making her march on foot in a gang of captives; and he is said to have slaughtered the children born to Athaulf by a former wife. But after a reign of seven days he too was assassinated, and his successor, the bold and energetic Wallia, made terms with Honorius, undertaking to conquer the whole of Spain for the Empire—a promise that he fulfilled before repassing the Pyrenees and founding (*c.* 420) the great Visigothic kingdom of which the capital and royal residence was Tolosa (Toulouse).

But we must return to Placidia, whose fortunes will take us back to Italy. The compact of Wallia with Honorius (*c.* 416) included the ransom of the imperial princess, whom Athaulf's death had left as a widow of about twenty-nine

at Narbonne, in South-west Gaul, where later the Franks captured a vast Gothic treasure, evidently partly 'spoils from the sack of Rome.'

[1] One feels inclined here to substitute the word 'ludicrous.' It may be better to get poor Attalus off the stage in a footnote. Either he was sent back by Athaulf or else, while attempting to escape, he was caught at sea by the fleet of Honorius, who exposed him in triumph lying bound in a cart, then cut off two of his right-hand fingers and sent him to one of the Lipari islands.

years of age. Once more Honorius offered a large quantity of wheat for his sister; or perhaps the famine in Spain caused Wallia to suggest this welcome form of payment. Six hundred thousand measures were considered a fair equivalent, and Galla Placidia returned to Ravenna. Here she found that Honorius and his ministers had formed the plan of marrying her to the general Constantius, whose exploits in Gaul were lately mentioned. He was a rough soldier, evidently without the natural refinement of the barbarian Athaulf, and the princess seems to have accepted him with great reluctance. But the marriage proved not unhappy. Constantius was raised to the Augustan dignity as the colleague of Honorius. Two children were born—Honoria and Valentinian—the one afterwards famous for her romantic connexions with Attila, the other the future Emperor Valentinian III. But in 421 Constantius died, and not long afterwards Galla Placidia found the Ravenna court intolerable on account of the follies of the weak-minded Honorius, and perhaps also because of his hostility to the Eastern Empire. So she went to Constantinople, taking her children with her.

At Constantinople was now reigning Theodosius II, who in 408 (two years before the sack of Rome by Alaric) had succeeded his father Arcadius, the brother of Honorius. Theodosius had come to the throne when he was a child of seven. He was now of age, but the regency had been entrusted to his sister Pulcheria, and she, as has been related in the Historical Outline, being a clever and strong character, remained the real ruler of the Eastern Empire during all his reign and still longer.

The Augusta of the West with her two infants was well received by her niece and nephew, Pulcheria and the young Theodosius, although it seems that they did not feel willing to acknowledge her title, as neither the barbarian Athaulf nor the rather rough-mannered soldier Constantius had been approved of by the Byzantine court as a fit consort for a member of the great Theodosian family. When therefore some months later the news arrived that Honorius had died

at Ravenna, and that an usurper (John) was being supported by the powerful influence and the Hunnish mercenaries of Aëtius, one of the chief generals of the army of the West, while the other, Boniface—who was in Africa—favoured the succession of the child of Placidia, it was but natural that Pulcheria and Theodosius, though they sent troops to suppress the usurper and thus openly declared for Placidia and Valentinian, should for the time regard themselves as the sole rulers of the reunited Roman Empire. But soon came the news that John, the usurper, had been captured and beheaded at Aquileia. Theodosius when he heard it was attending an exhibition in the Hippodrome of Constantinople. He at once stopped the horse-races and, 'singing, as he marched through the streets, a suitable psalm, conducted the people from the Hippodrome to the Church, where he spent the rest of the day in grateful devotion.' Whether he was guided, as Gibbon insinuates, by mere indolence, or by the wisdom and generous motives of Pulcheria, it is pleasant to be able to record that Theodosius did not take advantage of his position, but proclaimed the little Valentinian, now a child of six years, as the Emperor of the West under the regency of his mother.

Valentinian III reigned for thirty years (425–55). The chief events of his inglorious reign have been already briefly narrated in chronological order, as far as order is possible with so many diverse threads. During these thirty years scarcely one incident occurred that redounds to his credit, and perhaps only one act of his—the murder of Aëtius—was of any historical consequence. But great and momentous occurrences took place. Of these I select for further description in the next two chapters the meteoric career of Attila (445–52), and the conquest of North Africa, Sicily, and Rome (455) by Gaiseric. In the rest of this chapter I shall follow rapidly the fortunes of Galla Placidia until her death in 450.

During just half of her son's reign Galla Placidia held the regency. When he came of age in 440 she seems to have continued to exercise influence, though she withdrew from the actual administration of the State. She lived mostly at

Ravenna, probably paying not infrequent visits to Rome; and during one of these visits she died.

Aëtius and Boniface, the two chief generals of the army of the West, were equally distinguished for their skill in war and their manly virtues—qualities that have won them the title of 'the last of the Romans.' We have seen (p. 12) how Aëtius favoured the usurper John of Ravenna, and even brought an army of 60,000 Huns to support him, and how, strangely enough, when he changed sides and dismissed his Huns he was received by Galla Placidia with open arms and became her chief adviser and the commander of her home army, while his rival, Boniface, who had from the first declared for Placidia and Valentinian, was so unjustly treated by her that he invited Gaiseric and his Vandals to cross over from Spain and make themselves masters of the African diocese. It will be remembered also that, when the Vandals came and Boniface, repenting too late, found it impossible to stem the terrific flood of barbarian invasion, he returned to Ravenna and fought a duel there with Aëtius, who had hastened back from Gaul to meet him. He seems to have vanquished Aëtius in this duel; but he was wounded, and died shortly afterwards (432) of the wound.[1]

Placidia, it is said, proclaimed Aëtius a rebel, and he withdrew for a time to the camp of Rugilas, the king of the Huns in Pannonia. According to the accounts followed by Gibbon, he again appeared before Ravenna with a great army of Hunnish warriors, and Placidia was forced to 'deliver herself, her son Valentinian, and the Western Empire into the hands of an insolent subject'; but according to other writers, Aëtius, being the only capable commander, was again voluntarily accepted by the somewhat mutable Placidia as her *magister equitum peditumque*. However that may be, he seems to have

[1] A curious and somewhat legendary detail is recounted: that the dying Boniface urged his wife to marry Aëtius. Possibly some love-affair may have lain in the background of their quarrels. But Professor Bury, following Freeman, asserts that this duel is a legend and that the real fact was civil war and a battle at Rimini, where Aëtius 'was defeated . . . but proved superior in strategy' and appropriated the wife of Boniface, who had died of chagrin! This seems to be making confusion worse confounded.

received the titles of Duke and Patrician and to have been for over twenty years (432–54) the real ruler of the Western Empire—or rather of what remained of the Western Empire, for Britain had been abandoned, Southern Gaul formed the independent kingdom of the Visigoths, who also were practically masters of most of Spain, while North Africa and Sicily were in the power of Gaiseric, the Vandal.

It was during these years that Aëtius accepted the help of the Huns, commanded by Attila, against the Burgundians. It may seem somewhat surprising that the supreme commander of the Western Empire should have deigned to ask for aid from a savage pagan folk so abhorred both by the Romans and by all the German races, but Aëtius, as we have seen, was a personal friend of several Hunnish kings, and his son, Carpilio, was partly brought up in the camp of the Huns. The Burgundians, moreover, had been giving Aëtius much trouble. They came (*c.* 350) from the region of the Elbe, and, after joining in Radegast's unsuccessful invasion of Italy (405), had made Worms, on the Rhine, their chief town in 437. Aëtius is said to have routed and cut them to pieces, with the help of Attila's Huns, killing 20,000, among whom was their king Gundikar, and forcing the survivors to settle in the region to the west of Switzerland—the later dukedom of Bourgogne. This massacre is doubtless the historical fact that inspired the finely dramatic but gruesome story of the 'End of the Nibelungen,' told in the *Nibelungenlied*—of which we shall hear more later. In passing we may here observe that the poet has transferred the scene of the massacre from Burgundy and the Rhine to the banquet-hall of Attila's palace, Etzelnburg, on the Danube, and has wrongly introduced the great Ostrogoth king Theoderic of Verona ('Dietrich von Bern'), who was not born till after Attila's death, in the place of another Theoderic, a Visigoth king, who probably on this occasion helped Aëtius to vanquish the Burgundians. The splendid and momentous victory gained by Aëtius over his old friend Attila some fourteen years later will be described in the next chapter.

A year before this battle on the Catalaunian plains, where

7. Mausoleum of Galla Placidia
Ravenna

Attila's course of conquest was checked, Galla Placidia died. She had built for herself at Ravenna a mausoleum, and her body was carried thither from Rome. The mausoleum still exists and is one of the most perfect architectural and artistic survivals of this age to be found in Italy. It is a small cruciform building. The domed interior is richly decorated with resplendent mosaics and golden stars on a dark blue ground—reminding one, as Ricci says, in its diminutive size and form and flashing colours of a humming-bird with outspread wings. There are three great marble sarcophagi, nameless and empty, except for a few crumbling bones (Fig. 7 and explanation). These are believed to be the tombs of Placidia, of Constantius III, her husband, and of Valentinian III, her son. That of Placidia was evidently adorned with precious stones and covered in front with silver (or golden ?) plates, like the splendid *pala* of the high altar in St. Mark's at Venice; but Benedictine monks, robbing graves to build monasteries, competed with Lombard barbarians in plundering the mausoleum. Tradition asserted [1] that the body of the Empress was placed in the sarcophagus clothed in her imperial robes and seated on a throne; and tradition seems to have been right, for in the fourteenth century a hole was made, perhaps by wrenching away some of the remaining metal-work, and through this hole could be seen a mummy richly dressed and sitting on a chair of cypress-wood—either Galla Placidia herself or a figure placed there by the ecclesiastical authorities, who were ever eager to obtain or fabricate relics. In 1577 some children, trying to light up the interior of the sarcophagus by inserting a taper through the hole, set fire to the dress of the seated figure, and the whole was burnt to ashes, except a few bones, which, according to a contemporary writer, 'proved the body to have been of gigantic stature'—a rather puzzling statement!

Ravenna is so intimately connected with Galla Placidia

[1] See Muratori, *Annales ad ann.* 450, Gibbon, ch. xxxv, and Ricci's *Ravenna* (*Italia Artistica*). A similar tradition existed about the tomb of Charles the Great at Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle).

that a few words about the city will here be interesting. Of ancient Etruscan and Roman Ravenna, which was furnished by Augustus with a greatly enlarged harbour, the Portus Classis, capable of holding 250 war-galleys, scarce a vestige remains. The old port has disappeared, for the sea has retreated a long way. The solitary basilica of S. Apollinare in Classe fuori (built nearly a century after Placidia's death) probably marks the spot where St. Peter's disciple was murdered outside a gate of the naval town 'Classe'; but it is now two miles inland. Not far distant is the great pine forest (Pineta) which is so closely associated with Dante and with Byron, and which is known to have existed in the days of Odovacar, and doubtless existed also in the days of Placidia.

Galla Placidia built numerous churches in Ravenna—alas, now mostly restored out of all recognition. The great cathedral of Bishop Ursus, of which only the campanile still exists,[1] was founded shortly before her birth and must have been in its first splendour when she was a child. Also there was doubtless some church already dedicated to St. Apollinaris, the friend of St. Peter, for he was the martyr and patron of Ravenna. The old Baptistery was still a Roman bath, for it was not dedicated by Archbishop Neon till 450, the year of her death. She possibly built S. Giovanni Battista, S. Teodoro (afterwards Spirito Santo), S. Agata, and S. Croce (contiguous to her mausoleum), and certainly did build S. Giovanni Evangelista—that is, the original basilica on the foundations of which stand now the fine Romanesque campanile of the eleventh and a church of the eighteenth century. This basilica she founded in fulfilment of a vow made to St. John when she was overtaken by a tempest on her voyage from Constantinople to Ravenna. 'I will raise thee,' she exclaimed, 'a temple gleaming with marbles on the shore where the ship shall safely arrive.' Thereupon St. John appeared in dazzling form and seated himself on the prow of the vessel and, extending his arms, allayed the fury of the waves.

[1] The campanile was, of course, built later (see p. 282), but survived when the old basilica was demolished to make room for the present unsightly cathedral.

CHAPTER VI

ATTILA THE HUN

WHAT is known about the earlier history of the Huns has been already briefly related. It remains to describe the events of the few years during which they were the terror of Europe, led by Attila—the 'Scourge of God'—the devastator whose very war-horse left a trail where no grass ever grew again—the murderer of men, who writhes in the deepest pool of the infernal river of boiling blood—for so has popular and poetic imagination depicted him.[1]

Attila and Bleda, the nephews of that Rugilas who had befriended Aëtius, succeeded him as kings of the Huns. After some twelve years (*c.* 445) Bleda was deposed and murdered—probably by his brother Attila, who seems to have been regarded by his savage subjects with superstitious reverence, as being invincible by reason of the possession of an old sword, discovered by a shepherd and supposed to be the sword of the Hunnish war-god (called 'Mars' by the Latin chroniclers). As sole ruler of the Huns he rapidly and widely extended the Hunnish kingdom, which had already swallowed up the nearer nations of the Gepidae, Alani, Suevi (such as had not followed the Vandals), and the Ostrogoths, and now, it is said, spread its conquests, if not its permanent annexations, from Scandinavia to Persia, or even to the bounds of China.[2] Even during the years when he shared the kingship with Bleda

[1] *Quell' Attila che fu flagello in terra* . . . (Dante, *Inf.* xii, 134 *et seq.*). The epithet *Dei flagellum* is not found in contemporary writers. The modern Hungarians, who (falsely) claim descent from the Huns, assert, according to Gibbon, that the title was given to Attila by a hermit in Gaul, and that he adopted it.

[2] This is rejected as gross exaggeration by Niebuhr and others. Perhaps 'alliances' would be truer than 'conquests.'

Attila's growing power had become a spectre of dread to the Empire. In the West he had indeed aided Aëtius to vanquish the Burgundians, as we have already seen; but to the Empire itself he was intensely hostile, feeling none of that reverence for it which was felt by Alaric and by Theoderic the Great. He had overrun much of its Eastern dominions, had scattered Roman captives as slaves through many lands, and had crucified on Roman territory the deserters from his own army whom he had captured. Both to Valentinian III at Ravenna and to Theodosius II at Constantinople the brothers had sent insolent messages,[1] and a deprecating embassage from the Eastern Emperor to the camp of the Huns had resulted only in a demand for twice as much tribute as had been hitherto paid.

In 447 Attila, now sole king of all the Huns, advanced up to the very walls of Constantinople and exacted a threefold amount of tribute, which was paid by Theodosius, that 'meek man and excellent illuminator of manuscripts,'[2] whose exactions brought his own subjects to the brink of despair and insurrection. And Attila's demands were not limited to such tribute. A curious thread of romance is interwoven in this story of savagery and bloodshed. It will be remembered that Galla Placidia had two children—Honoria and Valentinian, born respectively in 418 and 419. The daughter seems to have been, in her way, as silly and as intractable as was the son—perhaps spoilt as well as naturally sentimental and *squilibrata*. At Ravenna the young Augusta—for this supreme title was given her in early life—had got into trouble when about sixteen years of age. She was therefore sent (*c.* 434) by her mother to Constantinople, where she spent some fourteen years 'in the irksome society of the sisters of Theodosius [Pulcheria and her two younger sisters] and their chosen virgins, whose monastic assiduity of prayer, fasting,

[1] Attila's messengers were bidden to use the formula, 'Attila, my lord and thy lord, commands thee . . .,' and on one occasion he called Theodosius a 'wicked slave that was conspiring against his master.' There is a story that at Milan Attila, seeing a picture of Huns or Scythians kneeling before an Emperor, commanded a painter to reverse their positions.

[2] Hodgkin's *Italy and her Invaders*.

and vigils she reluctantly imitated'; for the imperial Byzantine court had been converted into something very like a monastery, in which the ladies, who admitted no male visitors but priests and bishops, divided their time between needlework and religious exercises, and the Emperor himself—a strenuously inert, well-meaning, vacillating, aesthetic, and somewhat fanatic [1] person—lived the life of a quasi-artistic, sport-loving, and strictly orthodox Philistine. 'Hunting,' says Gibbon, 'was the only active pursuit that could tempt him beyond the limits of his palace; but he most assiduously laboured, sometimes by the light of a midnight lamp, in the mechanic occupations of painting and carving, and the elegance with which he transcribed religious books entitled the Emperor to the singular epithet of *Calligraphes*, or Fair Writer. . . . Thus the ample leisure which he acquired by neglecting the duties of his high office was filled by idle amusements and unprofitable studies.'

So maddened was Honoria by these surroundings that by means of a trusty messenger she sent (*c.* 448) a ring to Attila, begging him to claim her and add her to the number of his wives.[2] At first he treated her appeal with disdainful ridicule, but on reflexion it seemed to him a good pretext for demanding together with the person of the imperial Augusta a considerable portion of the Empire as her dowry. And the existence of this pretext saved him the trouble of inventing others when he decided to invade not only the Eastern Empire but also Italy itself.

In connexion with this escapade of Honoria the following description [3] of Attila's person and character will be interesting.

[1] It is to him that we owe the destruction of many Greek temples, *e.g.* those at Olympia. Note that his wife, the beautiful but lowly born Athenaïs, who at her baptism had taken the name of Eudocia, and was mother of Valentinian's wife Eudoxia, was already in exile in Palestine.

[2] In the *Nibelungenlied* and the *Waltarilied* (known to readers of Scheffel's *Ekkehard*) Attila, or Etzel, has one (chief?) wife, Helche by name. On her death he sues for Kriemhild, the Burgundian princess, who goes to Etzelnburg to marry him. Priscus makes *Cerca* his chief wife—one of many.

[3] An amplified paraphrase is given by Gibbon (ch. xxxiv). The modern Hungarians, proud of their (entirely imaginary) descent from the Huns, trace Attila's pedigree back to Ham.

It is translated from the Latin chronicler Jordanes, who, as we have already seen, wrote a compendium of the lost *Gothic History* of Cassiodorus, and Cassiodorus probably obtained his materials for the portrait from Priscus, who visited the Hun king and wrote an account of his visit. 'Attila,' says Jordanes, 'was a man born for the desolation of nations and as a terror to the world; who, I know not by what ruling of destiny, struck panic into all men by the dread-inspiring fame that proceeded forth from him. He walked with haughty step, turning his eyes hither and thither as if to show his pride and power even by the movements of his body; a lover of war, but temperate in conduct; exceeding strong in council; complaisant to suppliants; ever the protector of him whom once he had admitted into his confidence; short of stature, with broad chest, large head, small eyes, a thin beard sprinkled with grey, squash nose, pallid complexion—all characteristic of his race.'

Among the many embassies that passed between Attila and Theodosius one is of unusual interest to us because we possess a full account of this visit of Roman envoys to the residence of the Hun king—in the *Nibelungenlied* called Etzelnburg, *i.e.* Attila's stronghold—which was evidently [1] either on the site of modern Pesth, or Buda, or somewhere between the Danube and the Theiss. Attila had sent to Constantinople two envoys, Edeco and Orestes (for whom see pp. 16, 17), to demand Hun fugitives, and through their interpreter [2] a plan for murdering Attila had been suggested to them by some court official. They pretended to accept the proposal and did accept a large bribe, a 'weighty purse of gold,' but resolved to reveal the plot to their king. With them, on their return, went as envoys, and of course unconscious of the plot, a

[1] This seems confirmed by the *Nibelungenlied*, in which Kriemhild, coming from Worms, joins Etzel (Attila) and travels with him through Vienna, and then takes ship at Wieselburg and descends the Danube to Etzelnburg. The great palace and banquet-hall are described in the poem.

[2] The Huns despised Greek, preferring Gothic or Latin when not using Hunnish. Latin was the official and military language in much of the Eastern Empire. Edeco was probably a Herulian or Scirian, and Orestes an Illyrican of Roman descent.

respectable courtier' named Maximin (afterwards Marcian's minister) and his friend Priscus, the historian above mentioned, of whose Latin diary fragments have survived. They found the country northwards all devastated by Attila's incursions. Sardica (Sofia) and Naissus (Nissa, birthplace of Constantine the Great) were destroyed and deserted, except for a few sick folk crawling about amid the ruins. They traversed the hilly region of what is now Serbia, finding the country strewn with human remains; they crossed the Danube in dug-out canoes and arrived at Attila's camp.

But Attila was incensed at only receiving seventeen deserters. He insisted on the envoys proceeding further northward—some 250 miles further—to his great central camp, or stronghold, where his palace stood. They therefore followed guides, by many a long detour, through interminable forests and over innumerable rivers (tributaries of the Theiss, and the Theiss itself) till they arrived. Attila's great palace was built of wood, and, like the dwelling of an African chieftain, was surrounded by a stockaded and turreted rampart, within which his numerous wives had their separate houses. The sole building of stone in the encampment was a hot-bath-house, erected by a Roman architect. The envoys were entertained at a feast in the banquet-hall of the palace. Attila with his son and two barbarian magnates sat on a raised daïs apart, while the guests were seated at small tables—the imperial envoys having to take the lower room and yield precedence to various Gothic and other barbarian officials. Wine was served to all others in cups of gold and a variety of food on silver dishes, but on the royal table were only wooden cups and platters, and flesh alone was served, for, to cite a peculiarly Gibbonian phrase, Attila never tasted the luxury of bread. Nor did he, as did his chief warriors, adorn his weapons and the trappings of his horse with precious metals and stones; he proudly distinguished himself from others by the simple garb and customs of his nomad ancestors, allowing no ornament or bright colour to appear in his dress and accoutrements. When the treacherous design against his life was revealed to

Attila, he behaved with no little dignity and generosity, accepting the assurances of the imperial envoys that they were entirely innocent and sending them back unharmed. Moreover, when Theodosius—to whom he forwarded a message of withering scorn and reprimand—sent other envoys to deprecate his wrath, he did not condescend to insist on the punishment of the guilty courtiers. He even made some important concessions, liberating Roman captives and giving up territory south of the Danube.

In 450, the year in which Galla Placidia died, Theodosius was thrown from his horse and killed. Marcian, who succeeded him as the nominal husband of Pulcheria (p. 11), was of a very different character. One of his first acts was to put to death with the approval of Pulcheria (*Pulcheriae nutu*, says a contemporary writer [1]) the court satellite Chrysaphios, who had plotted the assassination of Attila. But this act of justice, prompted perhaps by the barbarian king's generous behaviour, did not in the least mean pusillanimous submission; for when Attila again demanded tribute Marcian's reply, says Priscus, was this: *Quiescenti munera largiturum, bellum minanti viros et arma objecturum*—'If he kept quiet he would confer liberal gifts on him, but if he threatened war he would meet him with warriors and with arms.'

Attila threatened, fiercely and insolently—but he hesitated; and while he hesitated whether to attack Constantinople or Ravenna news reached him from the far west and north—perhaps, too, from the far south—which determined his course.

A new barbarian power had come on the scene—that of the Franks, a tall, flaxen-haired, blue-eyed race, which had settled on the Lower Rhine and Maas and in the country of the ancient Belgae. On the death of their king Clodion his two sons (or nephews) quarrelled. One appealed to Attila for aid; the other, Meroveus (perhaps Merowig, who gave his name to the Merovingian dynasty), sought help from Aëtius. Attila determined to seize the opportunity of invading the Gallic

[1] The *cronachista arido, Marcellino Conte*, as Count Balzani calls him (*Le Cronache italiane del medio evo*). Gibbon cites him as 'Count Marcellinus.'

provinces of the Empire. Possibly he reckoned also on the co-operation of the Visigoths, whose great kingdom in South Gaul and Spain was ruled by Theoderic (the son, perhaps, of Alaric). But the Visigoths were at that time intensely indignant against Gaiseric, the Vandal king in Africa, who had sent his son's bride, Theoderic's daughter, back to Toulouse with her nose and ears cut off—having accused her of trying to poison him. Theoderic was hoping therefore to secure the sympathy and help of Aëtius and his Romans against the Vandal king, and the Vandal king not unnaturally appealed to Attila and begged him to attack Theoderic and Aëtius, promising to land forces in the south of Gaul.

Attila therefore with his Huns and his Ostrogoths joined forces with the Franks on the Neckar and, trusting to the co-operation of the Vandals, crossed the Rhine near Speyer and laid waste the Gallic provinces. Metz and Reims were sacked. Troyes was saved, it is said, by its bishop, St. Lupus, who seems to have exerted some strange influence on Attila such as we shall find so difficult to explain in the case of Pope Leo.[1] From Paris (Lutetia) St. Geneviève, either by acting the part of a Joan of Arc or by somehow influencing Attila, or the Fates, diverted the march of the barbarian marauders. Orleans was besieged, and the walls were already yielding to the battering-rams when, in answer, it is said, to the prayers of the bishop, Anianus, the combined army of Aëtius and of Theoderic appeared.

Attila retreated to the vicinity of Troyes, and here, on the Catalaunian plains (*i.e.* the champaign of Catalaunum, or Châlons), between the Seine and the Marne, was fought (451) a battle which probably saved all Western Europe from Hunnish supremacy and from the overthrow, perhaps the extinction, of Roman civilization and Christianity.[2] The battle is described by Jordanes in his *riassunto* of the *Gothic History* of Cassiodorus (*c.* 500), and Cassiodorus had doubtless conversed

[1] Attila is said to have once remarked: 'I know how to conquer men, but a wolf and a lion have known how to conquer the conqueror.'

[2] Written (in Germany) some months before September 1914. History repeats itself!

with veterans who had fought on one side or the other. It was 'so fierce, manifold, bloody, and obstinate' (*atrox, multiplex, immane, et pertinax*) 'that all antiquity could afford nothing similar.'

The slain, says this writer, amounted to 162,000, not counting 15,000 Franks and Gepidae killed in a preliminary encounter. This may be exaggeration—to say nothing of the 300,000 of another writer—but that the fight was long and terrible and bloody there can be no doubt. Attila, it is said, had erected a pyre of wooden saddles and other equipments with the intention of offering himself (and probably others) as a burnt-offering to his gods in case of defeat—as the Carthaginian Hamilcar is said to have done nine centuries before at Himera; but his defeat was not a rout. Both sides had suffered very severely, and the Visigoth king, Theoderic, had been slain by the javelin of an Ostrogoth. Attila was therefore able to withdraw his forces unpursued beyond the Rhine, for Aëtius (who was afterwards, like Stilicho, on this account accused of treason) shrank from attacking 'the wounded lion in his lair,' as Jordanes expresses it.

The wrath and resentment of Attila can be imagined. Once more he sends imperious demands for the hand and dowry of Honoria. He collects a still vaster army and in the spring of the next year (452) sweeps down like a typhoon upon Italy. His ultimate object was doubtless Rome, but first he meant to reward his Huns and avenge their Gallic defeat by the devastation and pillage of Northern Italy. Aquileia, which had now become the richest and most populous city of the North Adriatic coasts, was beleaguered by him for three months and assaulted, says Jordanes, with all kinds of siege-engines. But his efforts were in vain, and he had determined to abandon the enterprise when, it is said, as he rode round the walls, he observed that the storks, accompanied by their young, were leaving the city;[1] whence he inferred that there was no more food to be obtained. The siege was therefore

[1] Before the usual time, I suppose; at least storks and their young leave Southern Germany every year about the end of August.

continued, and ere long Aquileia was taken by storm and razed to the ground, so that less than a century later, in the days of Jordanes, as happened to Sybaris in the days of Herodotus, scarcely a vestige of the city was to be seen Later it was rebuilt and became the seat of a powerful anti papal patriarchate. But after its destruction by Attila all its inhabitants fled for refuge to Grado, on the seashore, or to those lagune-islands [1] which later formed a federation and elected tribunes and then a supreme Duke (Doge), the permanent site of whose palace was ultimately the Rivo Alto (Rialto, or 'Deep Stream') of Venice.

From Aquileia the Huns spread westwards. Altinum and Padua were burnt to the ground. Verona, Vicenza, and Bergamo were sacked. Even Milan and Pavia were probably occupied and plundered. Then Attila seems to have collected his forces near Lake Benacus (Lago di Garda) with the intention of crossing the Apennines [2] and assailing Rome.

The feeble and cowardly Valentinian had fled from Ravenna to Rome; but also at Rome panic prevailed, for there was no efficient army to stay the coming of Attila, and Aëtius had sent word that his Visigoth allies and his Gallic forces refused to march to the relief of Italy. It was therefore decided to send an embassy to deprecate the wrath of the king of the Huns, and doubtless also to offer him a very large bribe—probably under the conciliatory disguise of the oft-demanded dowry of Honoria, or rather a *douceur* for her loss, since she had been long ago, says Gibbon, married to some obscure and nominal husband before being immured in a perpetual prison to bewail her follies.

As chief envoy was chosen Avienus, a senator of high rank, and the Bishop of Rome, Leo the First (and the Great), accompanied the embassy, which crossed the Apennines in 452. They found Attila and his vast army encamped near the place

[1] These islands had long been inhabited. For the story of Venice see Part III, ch. iii. Aquileia is now a village of some nine hundred inhabitants.

[2] Dante wrongly states that Florence was refounded 'on the ashes left by Attila' (*Inf.* xiii, 149). Attila was often confused with Totila, who did occupy Florence, though he probably did not sack it.

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where the river Mincio flows out of Lago di Garda—where Peschiera now stands—not far from 'olive-silvery' Sirmio, nigh which the villa of Catullus once stood, nor far from the country, sacred to all lovers of Virgil, where the hills slope 'gently down towards Mantua, and where 'with windings slow wandereth the broad Mincius and borders his banks with soft reeds.'

What took place at the conference is not known for certain, but certain it is that after the conference, to the astonishment of all Europe, Attila countermanded the march to Rome and withdrew his army over the Alps towards Pannonia. Catholic tradition ascribes this marvel to the effect which Leo, as the Head of the Church and the vicegerent of the Deity, produced on the awestruck mind of the pagan monarch; and the case, already mentioned, of St. Lupus at Troyes is adduced as supporting the belief that some supernatural influence was at work, although perhaps nowadays the apparition of the air-borne Apostles, which is asserted by a later legend and has been so grandly depicted by Raffael, may find few believers.[1] Possibly Attila's conduct may be explained without recourse to the supernatural. Aëtius possessed a powerful army, even without his Visigoth allies, and Attila, had he pushed southwards, might have found himself in a trap. The fate of Alaric, moreover, who died so suddenly after sacking Rome, doubtless floated as an ominous spectre before the superstitious imagination of the Hun, and we may well believe that Leo did not attempt to exorcise this spectre. Lastly, there can be no doubt that the almighty influence of gold, or its equivalent, contributed largely to the result. At the same time it is undeniable that the personal influence of a strong character, inspired by absolute faith in the rightness of a cause and in the favour of heaven, sometimes verges on the miraculous; and such a character was Pope Leo the Great—straightforward, robust, inexorably firm, imperturbably convinced of the supernatural powers of the Church and of its divine foundation by the agency of St. Peter and St. Paul, whom he used to call the Romulus and

[1] See Fig. 8 and explanation.

8. Pope Leo and Attila

Remus of Christian Rome. These qualities come out in his writings. In his Discourses, as Villari says, he avoids all abstruse theological questions. All is simple, clear, and precise. Scarcely ever does he mention the saints or the Virgin, but speaks a great deal about Jesus Christ. The universal spiritual sovereignty of the Church—that is, of the *Roman* Church—was the one object towards which all his thoughts and actions tended; but temporal power he leaves wholly to lay authorities.

The fate of Alaric had perhaps deterred Attila from his intended sack of Rome. But Attila's renunciation did not save him from a similar fate. Shortly after his conference with the Roman envoys—where or when is uncertain, but probably in the next year (453) after his arrival in Pannonia, or perhaps at Etzelnburg—he died suddenly, at night, from the bursting of a blood-vessel, after the festal banquet that celebrated his marriage with a maiden named Idlico, the last of his very numerous wives. A vague and probably ill-founded report attributed to Idlico the crime, or glory, of having acted the *rôle* of a Judith.

'The body of Attila,' says Gibbon, 'was solemnly exposed in the midst of the plain, under a silken pavilion, and chosen squadrons of the Huns, wheeling round in measured evolutions, chanted a funeral song to the memory of the hero. The . . . remains were enclosed within three coffins, of gold, of silver, and of iron, and were privately buried in the night; the spoils of nations were thrown into his grave; the captives who had opened the ground were inhumanly massacred.'

After the death of Attila the great Hun Empire seems to have broken up and melted rapidly away. Ere forty years had elapsed the Ostrogoths, led by the great Theoderic, were making themselves masters of Italy, and the name of the Huns is seldom heard again.[1]

[1] The Avars (perhaps descendants of the Huns, or else new Turkish invaders) soon after occupy the Hun country. In 558–59 they with other Orientals assault Constantinople. Two centuries and a half later they are conquered by Charles the Great, and about 900 the Magyars arrive from the East and occupy the whole of Hungary.

It may be interesting if I here note the tradition that Leo, on his return, set up as a thank-offering for the help of the great Apostle the bronze statue of St. Peter—once perhaps the statue of Jupiter Capitolinus, renamed after the saint, or recast into his likeness. The figure, which is seated and has the big toe of its extended foot worn with the kisses [1] of millions, was first brought to St. Peter's (from the demolished monastery of S. Martino) about the year 1610. It is believed by some sceptics to be a product of the thirteenth century, a period when imitations of classical work began; but although it may not be a recast of the Capitoline Jupiter, which was probably destroyed or carried off by Gaiseric, it may date from the days of the early Empire, for it is certainly not Byzantine work and we hear of it about 725, during the Iconoclastic conflict.

In the year after Attila's death (454) Aëtius visited Rome and was killed by Valentinian, as has been told in the Historical Outline. The assassination of Valentinian himself, which took place early in the succeeding year and was quickly followed by the sack of Rome by Gaiseric the Vandal, may very reasonably be regarded as the real end of the Western Roman Empire. But during the next twenty years the title of Augustus was conferred, at intervals, on their *protégés* by the powerful commanders of the Roman army, some of which commanders were of pure barbarian origin. The main events of this inglorious period have been already related and do not merit further consideration. I shall therefore, after casting a brief retrospect at the rise of the African empire of Gaiseric, which was almost contemporary with that of Attila's empire in Central Europe, describe somewhat fully the capture of Rome by the Vandals, and then pass on to the deposition of Romulus Augustulus by Odovacar.

[1] Cicero (*In Verrem*) tells something similar of a bronze statue of Hercules at Agrigentum.

CHAPTER VII

GAISERIC[1] TO ODOVACAR

IT will be remembered that in the year 429 the Vandals under their king Gaiseric, perhaps invited[2] by the Roman governor Boniface, the great rival of Aëtius, crossed over from Spain to Africa. The invasion of the rich and fruitful provinces of North Africa scarcely needed to be incited by a treasonable offer. In Spain the Vandals had been much harassed by the Visigoths, whose king Wallia (p. 86) had subjugated the greater part of the country, but Gaiseric, or Genseric, who, like the famous Spartan king Agesilaus, was small and crippled (by a fall from his horse, it is said), seems to have reorganized their army and even to have ventured (428) a campaign against the Suevi, in what is now Northern Portugal. In the next year we find him landing on the coast of Africa, with a large force of fighting men and a multitude of women and children—in all perhaps 80,000. This landing of the Vandals on the coast of Africa is vividly, if rather too iminaagtively, pictured by Gibbon. 'The wandering Moors,' he says, 'as they gradually ventured to approach the seashore and the camp of the Vandals, must have viewed with terror and astonishment the dress, the arms, the martial pride and discipline of the unknown strangers who had landed on their coast, and the fair complexions of the blue-eyed

[1] For this name see note on Coin 16 of Plate I.

[2] This is stated by Procopius, the (Greek) writer to whom we shall soon be indebted for much information. Such charges easily arise. Stilicho, Boniface, Eudoxia, and Narses are all accused of this form of treason. Possibly the Vandals, who were Arians, were invited by the Donatists (a kind of Puritan sect) and other unorthodox Christians of Africa, who were fiercely persecuted by the Catholics—an act which I fear St. Augustine, so tolerant in early life, tried to justify.

warriors of Germany formed a very singular contrast with the swarthy or olive hue which is derived from the neighbourhood of the torrid zone. After the first difficulties had in some measure been removed which arose from the mutual ignorance of their respective language, the Moors, regardless of any future consequence, embraced the alliance of the enemies of Rome, and a crowd of naked savages rushed from the woods and valleys of Mount Atlas to satiate their revenge on the polished tyrants who had injuriously expelled them from the native sovereignty of the land.'

The most ghastly stories are told of the devastations and inhumanities of the Vandals in Africa during the ten years or so that elapsed before Gaiseric had overrun the whole of the provinces of North-west Africa and had concentrated his power in Carthage, whence with his powerful fleet he swept the Western Mediterranean and annexed the Balearic Isles, Corsica, Sardinia, and finally Sicily. Vandalism has become a synonym for barbarism and atrocity, but it is just possible that the contemporary account of the heretic Gaiseric and his Vandals given by a friend and biographer of St. Augustine and repeated by later writers may be exaggerated. It is scarcely credible that invaders who meant to settle in a country should burn and extirpate vines and fruit-trees and olive-groves, and the pictures of them piling up the corpses of slaughtered captives in order to scale the walls of a besieged town, or leaving them to putrefy and cause pestilence, appear somewhat imaginative.[1]

If Boniface really did incite the Vandals to cross over to Africa, he must have done so during the brief madness of anger, or must have made some very serious miscalculation, seeing that a year after their landing we find him fighting desperately against them. Being defeated, he retired into the maritime stronghold of Hippo, best known to many of us as the city of

[1] And yet I remember something of the kind in Central Africa, where I happened once to be in a stockade besieged by several thousand Machinga. They threw numbers of dead bodies in the stream (the Ruaha) which supplied us with water, and the stench of the decaying corpses of captives whom they massacred around the stockade was sickening.

St. Augustine. Here he was beleaguered by the Vandals. In the third month of the siege St. Augustine died (August 28, 430), at the age of seventy-six.[1] After fourteen months the besiegers began to suffer more from want of food than did the besieged, who had free access to the sea. Troops moreover were sent from Constantinople under the command of Aspar, who with Boniface ventured to assail the Vandals. But they suffered a severe repulse. Thereupon they embarked all their troops and sailed off—Aspar to Constantinople and Boniface to Ravenna, where, strangely enough, he was received in a most friendly way by Galla Placidia, and even honoured by medals, on which he was represented in a triumphal car with a palm in one hand and a scourge in the other. But soon afterwards he died, as has been related, from a wound received in a duel with Aëtius. The inhabitants of Hippo were then massacred and enslaved by the Vandals and the city was burnt.

What deterred Gaiseric from attempting at once the capture of Carthage herself is not very apparent. Perhaps one does not fully realize the immense extent of these African provinces, nor the small number of the Vandal warriors in comparison with the vanquished but still hostile population. Moreover Carthage, risen anew from the ancient ashes left by Scipio some six centuries before (if I may thus expand and modify Dante's phrase), had become once more the first city—the 'Rome,' as she was called—of North Africa, and, although of the gigantic Byrsa and the other fortifications of the old Phoenician city only a few questionable relics have survived to our day, it is not improbable that enough still remained in this age to render the place [2] difficult of capture in spite of

[1] His writings—some hundreds in number, and some of considerable length, such as the *Confessions* and the *City of God*—were saved when Hippo was sacked.

[2] The new city (*Colonia Carthago*), built by Julius Caesar and Augustus, did not stand, as some assert, at a distance from the old site (*e.g.* on the site of modern Tunis), for the extant Roman remains—the amphitheatre (with a column recording the martyrdom of SS. Perpetua and Felicitas), the great Thermae, the circus, and the reservoirs, which were supplied by the gigantic aqueduct that brought water from the hills sixty miles distant—all lie within

the unwarlike effeminacy of its inhabitants, who are described by contemporary writers as wallowing in a quagmire of luxury, irreligion, and vice. Possibly therefore Gaiseric wished before assailing this stronghold to rest his warriors and to build up a permanent state.

In this connexion it is interesting to note that there are statements in the chroniclers which seem to show that Vandal policy was characterized by features which we should call socialistic. The dominant race did indeed assume a feudal lordship over the soil and did enslave many of their captives, and were themselves immune from taxation, but those of the native population who were workers were favoured as against the inactive classes. Of the wealthy nobles, the clerics, and the large landowners many were severely taxed and mulcted, when not banished or otherwise suppressed, while agriculture, industry, and trade were encouraged by exemption from heavy taxation.

During the last years of this period of inaction the Vandals were nominally at peace with the Empire, for a truce was signed three years after the sack of Hippo. But it was of short duration, and in 439 Carthage fell. The next three years saw the conquest by Gaiseric's fleet of all the islands of the Western Mediterranean, the devastation of Sicily, and descents even on the shores of Italy. In 442 Valentinian III, who had lately come of age and had begun to free himself from the regency of his mother Placidia, made a humiliating treaty with the Vandal king, acknowledging him to be the ruler of all the dominions he had conquered—not merely a 'federated' ally, as had been so often the case when the Empire acknow-

the ancient walls and close under the Byrsa, the hill of the acropolis (on which St. Louis died), and near the harbour and the old naval port (Cothon). This Roman city of Carthage, which was captured by Gaiseric and was the Vandal capital for nearly a century, is briefly described by several old writers, who speak of its magnificent buildings and its splendid circensian games, and also of a large new harbour—perhaps that of the Stagnum, inside the tongue of land (like Porto Venere at Spezia) on which the Oppidum Ligulae or Taeniae stood. See Gibbon, ch. xxxiii, and Bosworth Smith's *Carthage*; and perhaps I may also refer to the Appendix on Carthage in my edition of Virgil's *Aeneid*, Book I (Blackie and Son).

ledged the kingship of a barbarian chief, but an absolute and independent monarch. Thus the Western Empire was now shorn of most of its African diocese, of all the western islands, including Sicily, of most of Spain and Southern Gaul, and of Britain, while Attila was at this time lord of Dacia and was already devastating Moesia and Pannonia and Noricum and Rhaetia and much of Illyricum and Thrace.

During the next thirteen years—which were the last thirteen of the reign of Valentinian III and witnessed the meteoric career of Attila—Gaiseric seems to have been fairly quiet. He was doubtless consolidating his empire and waiting for an opportunity of extending his conquests beyond Africa, while his fleets swept the Mediterranean and his army was constantly adding to his territory towards Tripoli and the Great Syrtis.

In 455, the twenty-seventh of the forty-nine years of his reign, Gaiseric, with [1] or without the invitation of the Empress Eudoxia, assembled a fleet and landed a band of his Vandals and Moors at the mouth of the Tiber. Rome was defenceless. There was no organized military force, and the whole city was in a state of frenzied and impotent excitement. Maximus, the successor of the murdered Valentinian, when attempting to flee was stoned to death by the mob, and his body was torn to pieces and thrown into the Tiber; and when three days later the column of Vandal warriors and their African auxiliaries approached the gates of the city it was met, not by a desperate populace determined to defend its hearths and homes, nor by a phalanx of trained fighters, but by a group of unarmed priests headed by a venerable bishop—the same Leo who three years ago had faced the savage Attila near the shores of ocean-waved Benacus, with what results we know. Gaiseric is said to have listened respectfully to the dignified and fearless eloquence of Leo and to have promised

[1] As Valentinian was killed early in 455 and Gaiseric landed at Ostia in June 455, Muratori, the great Italian archaeologist and historian (*c.* 1700), questioned the possibility of this; but Gibbon reminds us of Cato's figs, which he threw down on the floor of the Roman Senate-house, exclaiming: 'These were picked but three days ago at Carthage.' Moreover, Gaiseric doubtless had naval and land forces already close at hand, in Sicily.

—what perhaps he could not wholly perform—that he would spare Rome's buildings from fire and the unresisting Romans from slaughter or torture. But no such marvel happened as in the case of Attila; no supernatural influence made Gaiseric recall his Vandals to their ships and set sail for Sicily or Carthage: he gave the word for plunder, and during the next fourteen days all the transportable treasures of Rome were continually being carried to the vessels that lay at the mouth of the Tiber.

The Vandals seem to have destroyed but little in Rome, but to their wholesale plundering may be attributed the disappearance of many celebrated works of Greek and Roman art, which, together with immense quantities of precious objects, such as jewels, gold and silver and bronzen decorations, furniture and costly broideries and vestments, were transported to Carthage—all except one shipload, which is said to have gone to the bottom. Much of this plunder found its way to Constantinople when, seventy-eight years later, Justinian's general, Belisarius, captured Carthage, and its final destruction was due, not to Vandals, but to the French and Flemish and Venetian crusaders who sacked Constantinople in 1204. Perhaps, however, this fate was escaped (though a worse was suffered) by what to many may seem the most interesting of these treasures, namely, the spoils of the Jewish Temple. Nearly four hundred years earlier Titus had brought these from Jerusalem, and sculptured images[1] of some of them may still be seen upon his triumphal arch at Rome. The seven-branched golden candlestick, the golden shewbread table, the silver trumpets, and numerous consecrated golden vases had been deposited (according to Josephus) in the Temple of Peace at Rome, and the Great Veil of the Temple together with the sacred Books of the Law were preserved in the Palace of the Caesars. A tradition asserts that these spoils were thrown into the Tiber when Maxentius was drowned at the Milvian

[1] Rather roughly outlined. The candlestick has reliefs or engravings of animals, which is said by Gregorovius to be an infringement of Jewish rules (in spite of Solomon's lions and oxen and cherubim ?).

Bridge. However, they probably did not suffer this fate, but were taken to Carthage, and some of them at least were transported by Belisarius to Constantinople. And their strange fortunes did not end there, if we may believe the contemporary historian Procopius, who asserts that Justinian, overcome by religious scruples, sent the 'utensils of the Jewish Temple' back to Jerusalem, where they were put in the treasure-chamber of a Christian church—perhaps the Church of the Resurrection ('Anastasis') which Helena or Constantine had built. If this be true, then we must fear that they fell later into the hands of the Saracens, and may be now in some remote Arabian or Syrian mosque. Scarcely less interesting is the fact that the Vandals carried off to Carthage (unless it went to the bottom of the sea) half—if not the whole—of the so-called golden roof of Jupiter's temple on the Capitol, which was made of tiles of gilded bronze, and doubtless also the gilded statues and quadrigae—decorations which are said to have cost the Emperor Domitian as much as two and a half million pounds of our money.

Among the thousands of Roman captives, most of whom were sold into slavery, were three of special importance. 'The Empress Eudoxia,' Gibbon tells us, 'advanced to meet her friend and deliverer, but soon bewailed the imprudence of her own conduct. She was rudely stripped of her jewels, and together with her two daughters, the only surviving descendants of the great Theodosius [Pulcheria having died two years before], she was compelled to follow the haughty Vandal.'

It will be remembered (p. 14) that the elder of these daughters, Eudocia, married Hunneric, who succeeded his father Gaiseric in 477—for the little crippled founder of the Vandal Empire reigned for just upon fifty years. The Empress herself with her younger daughter, Placidia, was ultimately (*c.* 463) sent to Constantinople, where the Eastern Emperor, Leo the Thracian, seems to have received her well—a proof, one might think, that she was not believed, or not known, to have invited Gaiseric to Rome. And a further proof would seem to be offered by the fact that her daughter Placidia

was the wife of that Olybrius who was afterwards (472) Roman Emperor for a few weeks.

A year after the capture of Rome the Vandal fleet suffered a crushing defeat near Sardinia in a battle against the Roman fleet commanded by Ricimer, but the disaster does not seem to have affected Gaiseric seriously, for some twelve years later (468) a great crusade which was organized against him by both parts of the Empire proved a total failure, many of the 1113 vessels that formed the imperial fleet being destroyed by Gaiseric's fire-ships. The son of Gaiseric, Hunneric, who married the Theodosian princess Eudocia, maintained his father's empire on land and sea, and distinguished himself by his fierce persecution of Catholics—or perhaps of clerics of both parties, for he burnt the Arian patriarch of Carthage in the Carthaginian forum. As will be narrated in a later chapter, Gaiseric's empire came to an end in 533, when a successor of Hunneric, Gelimer by name, was vanquished by Justinian's general, Belisarius, who was so dramatically rapid and successful that on his capture of Carthage, it is said, he was able to sit down to the dinner prepared for the Vandal king.

The following passages, translated from Gregorovius (*Die Geschichte der Stadt Rom*, i, 6), give some further interesting details connected with the capture of Rome by Gaiseric. After relating how the Empress Eudoxia and her two daughters were carried over to Africa by Genseric [Gaiseric] he adds: 'One of these, Eudocia, was compelled to give her hand to Hunnic, the son of Genseric, but after living at Carthage for sixteen years in hateful wedlock she managed to escape and, joining a company of pilgrims, after manifold adventures she reached Jerusalem. Here she soon afterwards died, and was buried near her renowned grandmother of like name [*i.e.* Eudocia, originally Athenais, for whom see p. 95 *n.*]. The other daughter, Placidia, was liberated, and in Constantinople once more met her husband Olybrius, who was then a fugitive.'

There is a church in Rome that is much visited on account of the wonderful statue of Moses—one of the figures of the gigantic monument of Pope Julius II which Michelangelo was never able to finish, and which he used to call 'the tragedy of my life.' This church is now called S. Pietro ad Vincula (in Vincoli). It was built by the Empress Eudoxia and originally called the Basilica Eudoxiana. Its second name refers to the following legend. 'Eudocia, the mother of the Empress Eudoxia,' says Gregorovius, 'brought from Jerusalem the chain of St. Peter [see Acts xii], of which she presented one half to Constantinople and sent the other half to her daughter in Rome. Here existed already the chain with which the apostle had been fettered before his martyrdom, and when Pope Leo [the same Pope Leo who faced Attila and Gaiseric] happened to hold the two chains close to each other they attached themselves insolubly together, forming a single chain of thirty-eight links. The miracle induced Eudoxia, then the consort of Valentinian III, to build this church, in which the chains [1] are still preserved and revered.'

The spoliation of Rome by Gaiseric's followers, says Gregorovius, certainly seems to justify the proverbial use of the word 'vandalism,' for a great number of citizens were utterly ruined and thousands were enslaved. But the almost unanimous testimony of writers goes to prove that Gaiseric was no such 'vandal' as the modern Prussian. He kept his word in regard to the destruction by fire or other means of the churches and palaces and ancient monuments.

* * * * *

The End of Romulus Augustulus

In the period between 455 and the deposition of Romulus Augustulus there are few events of any importance except perhaps Ricimer's naval victory over the Vandals, already related, and his sack of Rome in 472—the third time it had been plundered in about sixty years. The contemporary

[1] In the Calendar the first of August is the festival of 'St. Peter's Chains.' Filings from the chains were used by the Popes as very precious gifts.

chronicles consist almost entirely of continual tumults and insurrections and depositions and elections, the imperial puppets of the military dictators Ricimer, Gundobald, and Orestes following each other, with intervals of interregnum, so rapidly that in twenty years no less than nine so-called Emperors assume the purple. The brief narrative given in the Historical Outline will therefore suffice, and I shall here only add a lively passage from Gibbon descriptive of the fate of the deposed Emperor, and a few words about the earlier life of Odovacar.

'In the space of twenty years since the death of Valentinian nine Emperors had successively disappeared, and the son of Orestes, a youth recommended only for his beauty, would be the least entitled to the notice of posterity, if his reign, which was marked by the extinction of the Roman Empire in the West, did not leave a memorable era in the history of mankind. . . . The son of Orestes assumed and disgraced the names of Romulus and Augustus. . . . The life of this inoffensive youth was spared by the generous clemency of Odoacer, who dismissed him with his whole family from the imperial palace, fixed his annual allowance at six thousand pieces of gold, and assigned the castle of Lucullus in Campania for the place of his exile or retirement. . . . The delicious shores of the Bay of Naples were [in earlier days] crowded with villas, and Sylla applauded the masterly skill of his rival [Marius], who had seated himself on the lofty promontory of Misenum, which commands on every side the sea and land as far as the boundaries of the horizon. The villa of Marius was purchased within a few years by Lucullus, and the price had increased from two thousand five hundred to more than fourscore thousand pounds sterling. It was adorned by the new proprietor with Grecian arts and Asiatic treasures, and the houses and gardens of Lucullus obtained a distinguished rank in the list of imperial palaces.[1] When the Vandals

[1] Lucullus had other villas of equal, though various, magnificence at Baiae, Naples, Tusculum, etc. He boasted that he changed his climate with the storks and cranes.

became formidable to the sea-coast the Lucullan villa gradually assumed the strength and appellation of a strong castle, the obscure retreat of the last Emperor of the West. About twenty years after that great revolution it was converted into a church and monastery to receive the bones of St. Severinus.[1] They securely reposed amidst the broken trophies of Cimbric and Armenian victories till the beginning of the tenth century, when the fortifications, which might afford a dangerous shelter to the Saracens, were demolished by the people of Naples.' (Gibbon, ch. xxxvi.)

Some believe this villa of Lucullus to have stood on Pizzofalcone, now an elevated quarter of Naples. But on Cape Misenum, which forms the Bay of Pozzuoli (Puteoli), are still to be seen relics of a great villa—doubtless the Lucullan villa in which the Emperor Tiberius was smothered, and probably the one in which also Romulus Augustulus ended his days.

Of Odovacar's earlier life some interesting details, more or less trustworthy, are given by Gibbon, Villari, and others—drawn from Jordanes and various old writers, one of whom was a disciple and biographer of St. Severinus.

The father of Odovacar and of his brother Onulf was, as we have seen, probably the Scirian or Herulian chieftain Edeco, who was sent by Attila to Constantinople as the fellow-envoy of Orestes, the father of Romulus Augustulus. After the death of Attila and the dispersion of the Huns the young Odovacar led a wandering life and may possibly, says Gibbon, have been the sea-rover of similar name who commanded a fleet of Saxon pirates on the northern seas. Anyhow, the scenes of his early adventures seem to have been in northern regions, for we hear of him, about 460, traversing Noricum (Styria, Salzburg, etc.) at the head of a band of barbarian soldiers of fortune who were bound for Italy, to seek service under Ricimer. Noricum had not yet recovered

[1] For Severinus see next page. He died in 482. Six years later, says Gibbon, his body was brought to Italy, and 'the devotion of a Neapolitan lady invited it to the Lucullan villa, in the place of Augustulus, who was probably no more.'

from the devastations of Attila and was in a state of anarchy. The only recognized authority was that of a hermit, St. Severinus, who from his cell seems to have upheld order in the country. The saint was visited, it is said, by Odovacar, who wished to learn the fortunes that awaited him in Italy. As the tall young warrior stooped to enter the lowly doorway, he was greeted by the holy man with these words: *Vade ad Italiam. Vade, vilissimis nunc pellibus coopertus, sed multis cito plurima largiturus*—'Go on to Italy! Go on! Though now clad in this mean vesture of skins, thou wilt ere long lavish riches on many.' Not much later Odovacar was fighting in the ranks of Ricimer's army under the walls of Rome, and seems to have risen to high command and to popularity, for in 476 his soldiers—Herulians and other barbarians who formed the chief strength of the imperial army—formally elected him as their king by raising him on a shield (as was so often done when the army chose a new Emperor). It was as a king of barbarian warriors that he constituted himself supreme ruler of Italy. Thus he did not appropriate, but abolished, the imperial dignity and title.

NOTES ON COINS[1]

PLATE I

FROM *c.* 306 TO *c.* 565

1. Constantine I. 2. Constantius II. 3. Julian (Apostate). 4. Jovian. 5. Valentinian I. 6. Valens. 7. Gratian. 8. Valentinian II. 9. Theodosius the Great. 10. Honorius and Arcadius. 11. Galla Placidia. 12. Valentinian III. 13. Theodosius II. 14. Pulcheria. 15. Romulus Augustus (-ulus). The word *Conob* or *Comob*, found frequently on medieval coins, stands for Comitis Obryziacus, *i.e.* 'The Mint of the Count.' This *Comes sacrarum largitionum* was a kind of Finance Minister.

16. *Obv.* of bronze coin of 22 *nummi*. Figure of warrior in cuirass and military cloak, leaning on spear: very possibly meant for Gaiseric himself. Earlier coins of Gaiseric give (as often in the case of barbarian rulers) the portrait of the late or the reigning Emperor, viz. Honorius and Valentinian III (see No. 22). None of the coins attributed to Gaiseric give his name. What on some copper coins was once supposed to be 'Genseric' is now read as 'Mense Augus.' (in the month August). The *legend* KARTHAGO and the horse's head, the old symbol of Carthage, on the *reverse* show that the coin was struck after the capture of Carthage in 439. The oldest chroniclers spell his name 'Gaiseric' (perhaps 'Lord of the Spear'). Procopius gives 'Gizerichus.'

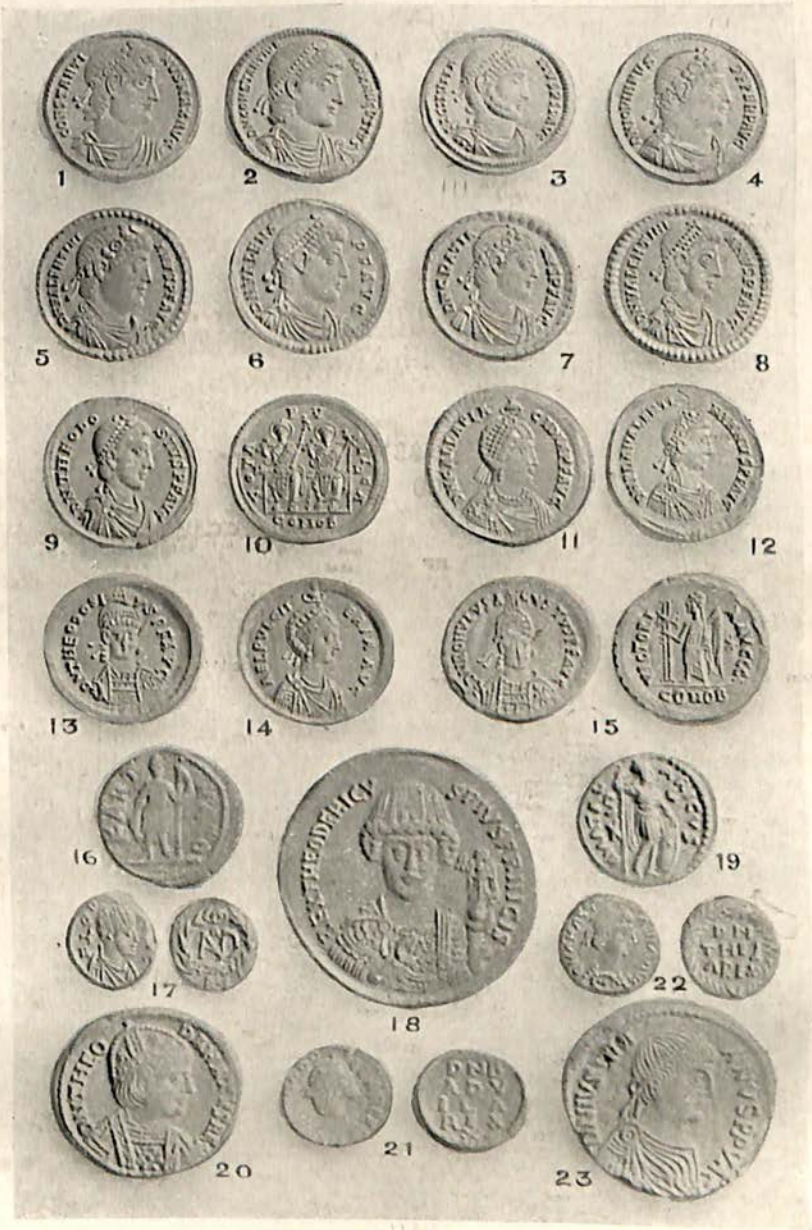
[1] The plates are taken from moulds of coins at the British Museum and elsewhere kindly supplied by Mr. F. Allan. The first fifteen coins need little comment. Further details about the others may be found in Mr. Wroth's fine British Museum *Catalogue of the Coins of the Goths and Lombards* and in Engel and Serrure's standard work, *Numismatique du moyen âge*. For Plate II see p. 450.

17. Silver. *Rev.:* Bust of Odovacar, beardless but with moustache; in cuirass and military cloak. *Legend:* FL OD[OV]AC, *i.e.* Flavius Odovacar, 'Flavius' being Vespasian's family name, later adopted as a regal title by Constantius I and some of his successors, also by Lombard kings. On *obv.* his monogram in wreath, and below RV (Ravenna). He first minted coins with his own name after fixing his residence at Ravenna.

18. Gold. *Obv.* of a triple 'solidus' (about 210 gr. weight) found near Sinigallia in 1894. Before this discovery no extant coin of Theoderic bore his portrait, although Gibbon asserted that 'the image of Theoderic is engraved on his coins.' As a rule such princes did *not* put their name or portrait on the *gold* coinage, which (Procopius tells us) was regarded as a prerogative of the Emperors. This exceedingly precious relic of Romano-Gothic art, says Mr. Wroth (*Brit. Museum Catalogue*), some ancient possessor had set as a brooch. Fragments of the setting are still attached to the *reverse. Legend:* REX THEODERICUS PIUS PRINC[EPS] I[NVICTUS ?] S[EMPER ?]. In *l.* he holds globe on which stands a Victory holding wreath and palm. The owner of this unique coin is Comm. F. Gnecchi, Milan, who most kindly supplied me (through Mr. F. Allan, of the British Museum) with the plaster cast from which this reproduction was taken.

19. Bronze. Athalaric in armour, with spear and oval shield. *Legend:* DN (Dominus, or Dominus Noster) ATALARICUS. In *field* SC (Senatûsconsulto) and X (10 *nummi*). Probably issued by Athalaric's mother, Amalasuntha. The *obverse* shows a rather fine bust of personified Rome—a testimony perhaps to the statement that the queen-mother encouraged the fine arts at Rome.

20. Bronze. *Legend:* DN. THEODAHATUS REX. A finely modelled portrait. The closed crown (not diadem) is interesting, and the jewelled vestment. The face certainly corresponds to one's conception of his character, and is of a type (perhaps Vandalic) very different from that of Theoderic. Cassiodorus tells us that Theodahad ordered his portrait to be imprinted on his coins 'as a memorial of our reign to future



9. COINS: CONSTANTINE I TO JUSTINIAN
c. 306–565

ages.' Probably minted at Rome, after his breach with Justinian (535–36).

21. Bronze. Bust of Baduela (or Baduila), *i.e.* Totila, with *legend* .. DUELA REX; on *rev.* DN. BADUELA REX (or BADUILA ?). Struck after 549, at Rome (or Pavia ?).

22. Silver. *Legend:* DN. THEIA REX. The *obverse* shows the name and portrait of the Eastern Emperor Anastasius (*d.* 518), although the date of this coin is of course 552–53. The same type was often kept long after an Emperor's decease.

23. Bronze. *Legend:* DN. JUSTINIANUS PPVAG (probably mistake for PPAUG, *i.e.* Pius Princeps Augustus). One of many extant portraits of Justinian. Probably issued by Theodahad or Witigis (Vitiges). Minted at Rome *c.* 536–38. After 540 (when Belisarius took Ravenna) imperial Byzantine coins of Justinian were struck in Italy, though probably not till after Theia's death and the fall of the Gothic domination (*c.* 553–55).

ITALY
IN THE AGE OF
ODOVACAR
(476-493)
To show relative positions
of the various peoples
SCOTS
BRITONS
JUTES & SAXONS
JUTES
FRISII
SAXONS
THURINGIA
KINGDOM OF FRANKS
Col. Agrippina
KINGDOM OF SYAGRIUS
Parisii
Armorica
ALAMANNI
Quintana
RUGIANS
LANGOBARDS
HERULIANS
SLAVS
HUNS
GEPIDAE
Danubius (Ister)
KINGDOM OF BURGUNDY
Lugdunum
Aquitania
Burdigala
Mediolanum
Ticinum
KINGDOM OF OSTROGOTHS
Tiburnia
Aquileia
Gradus
REALM OF EMPEROR NEPOS
Ravenna
Faesulae
Ancona
Spoletium
Moesia
Thrace
Hadrianopolis
CONSTANTINOPLE
Dacas
KINGDOM OF SUEVI
Palentia
Tolosa
Narbonensis
Arelate
Genua
Pisa
Massilia
Corsica
ROMA
Beneventum
Neapolis
Tarentum
Nicopolis
Abydos
Athenae
Halicarnassus
Corinthus
Rhegium
Syracusae
Sicilia
Carthago
Sardinia
Tarraco
Valentia
Valeria
Toletum
Corduba
Gades
Carthago nova
KINGDOM OF VISIGOTHS
KINGDOM OF ODOVACAR
KINGDOM OF THE VANDALS
EASTERN EMPIRE
Illyricum
Creta
English Miles
0 100 200 300

PART II

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

476–568

THE history of the three centuries (476–800) which intervened between the abolition of the imperial dignity in Italy and its revival in the person of Charles the Great falls naturally into two periods, the first of nearly a century (476–568), and the second of rather more than two centuries (568–800). The first of these periods now forms the subject of our narrative. In this period we have first, during sixteen and a half years, the reign of Odovacar, Ottowacker, or Odoacer, whom we had perhaps better call by the name which he uses on his coins (Odovac, or Odovacar) instead of using the Romanized form 'Odoacer'; then comes the Ostrogothic domination (493–535), including the eventful reigns of Theoderic the Great, his son Athalaric (under the regency of his mother Amalasuntha), and Theodatus, or Theodahad; then the 'Gothic war,' with the long campaigns of Belisarius and Narses, ending in the defeat and death of the Ostrogoth kings Totila (Baduela) and Teia (553); then the establishment during fifteen years (553–68) of Byzantine supremacy in almost every part of Italy, which thus for a time becomes a diocese of the Eastern Emperor, Justinian.

The second period, which will be treated in the next Part of our book, begins with two centuries (568–774) of Lombard domination, a long series of years which, except for some very interesting personalities and certain questions concerning architecture, is almost as dreary as that so-called Dark Age which followed the Dorian invasion of ancient Greece. Finally we shall have the appeal of the Papacy

to the Frank monarchs, followed by the interference and domination of the Franks and the so-called re-establishment of the Western Roman Empire by the act of Pope Leo III, who placed a crown of gold on the head of the Frankish monarch when, all unsuspecting (some say), he rose from his devotions before the tomb of St. Peter in Rome.

As in Part I, so also in Parts II and III I shall first give succinct narratives of the chief political occurrences to serve as a kind of framework, and shall then select some of the more important episodes and characters and certain facts of special literary or artistic interest as subjects for the succeeding chapters, trusting that in these sketches it may not be necessary on all occasions to explain anew the chronological sequence.

1. Odovacar's Reign (476–93)

The thread of narrative was dropped (p. 17) at the deposition of Romulus Augustulus by Odovacar, and at the end of Part I a sketch was given of the subsequent life of the deposed Emperor and another illustrating the earlier life of the barbarian king who for more than sixteen years (if we reckon up to his death, August 15, 493) occupied the throne, though he did not assume the title or the diadem, of the Roman Emperors.

It was at Ravenna that the youth Romulus Augustulus had resided, and here he was captured; here, too, Odovacar took up his residence. The realm over which his rule was recognized comprised the whole of Italy south of the Alps, and Rhaetia, between the Alps and the Danube. The greater part of Sicily also became subject to him after the death of Gaiseric (477); but the Vandals continued to hold Lilybaeum and other parts of the island, as well as Sardinia and Corsica, while beyond the Western Alps the Burgundian monarchs held the country of the Rhone and Saône, the Visigoths occupied all Spain and the south of Gaul, and further north the great Germanic nations of Alemanni and Franks were supreme.

As soon as Odovacar felt himself securely seated he sent an embassy to the Eastern Emperor in order to define his position and claim recognition. This embassy was empowered to

declare in the name of the Roman Senate and also in that of the late Emperor, Romulus Augustulus—whose signature Odovacar had doubtless procured—that the Roman, or rather the Italian, people had decided that one Emperor was sufficient for both parts of the Empire; and in the name of Odovacar they delivered up to Zeno the imperial insignia—the *ornamenta Palatii*—the purple robe, the diadem, the globe and sceptre —with the request that the Emperor would allow the ruler of Italy the title of Patrician.[1]

Zeno gave answer that his predecessors, Leo I and the Empress Verina, had elected two Emperors for the Romans; one, Athemius, they had killed; the other, Nepos, they had exiled; but Nepos was still living and was occupied in ruling his province [2] of Dalmatia. They should therefore apply to him for what they required. Privately, however, Zeno wrote to Odovacar and addressed him as 'Patricius.'

It will be remembered that the fall of Orestes, the father of Romulus Augustulus, was mainly due to the fact that he had refused to give over to his soldiers a third of the land of Italy, which they had demanded. Odovacar had gained the support of the army by promising to grant this demand, and it was now necessary to do so. The details of this most important political measure are not known for certain, but there are evident signs of the eviction and ruin of many large landowners who occupied great tracts of the fertile districts, and of the division of such estates among those veterans who undertook to cultivate the soil. In other cases the new possessors contented themselves with acting as lords of the manor, employing the former owners as their tenants, and probably ameliorating the condition of the former slaves, whom they adopted as villeins, according to northern feudal custom. Odovacar, like Alaric and Athaulf and like the great Ostrogoth,

[1] The highest Roman dignity possible below the imperial. The Emperor's father generally held it. Zeno decreed that none should hold it who had not already been consul, prefect, or *magister militum*. In later times Popes conferred the title of 'Patricius' on some of the German emperors and other princes.

[2] See p. 16, and for Zeno see the list at p. 18.

Theoderic, had deep reverence for the constitution of the Empire and seems to have depended entirely on the ancient imperial officials for the administration of the laws and the collection of taxes.

In 480 Nepos, who was still formally recognized by the Eastern Empire, was killed at Salona by his *comites palatii* (palace officials). Odovacar was thus relieved of the only rival claimant to the throne of Italy. He had collected at Ravenna, which still possessed a fine harbour, a considerable fleet, intended chiefly for operations against the piratical Vandals and for the conquest of Sicily. On the death of Nepos he sailed across the Adriatic and annexed Dalmatia to his Italian kingdom. This was of course an act of open hostility against Zeno and a violation of the integrity of the Eastern Empire; but Zeno was not in a condition to retaliate, being too dangerously involved in the religious disturbances which had spread from the East, that hotbed of doctrinal sophistries, where the patriarch of Alexandria had been murdered by fanatics. These conflicts were now agitating Constantinople, and had reached a serious climax, due to Zeno's well-meant attempt to reconcile two embittered opponents—the Monophysites (who asserted that the human and divine nature of Christ were combined in one) and the so-called Orthodox party. With the help of the patriarch Acacius he had published a letter which is known by the name *Henotikon* (*i.e.* an Appeal for Unity), but it was met, as such attempts are generally met, by the bitterest opposition, especially on the part of the Pope and the Catholics of Rome, and for a long time it only aggravated the miserable strife, until finally the so-called Orthodox party won the victory.[1]

Though Odovacar was an Arian, he kept in this quarrel on the side of Pope Simplicius; but when the Pope died, in 483, he rightly considered it within his province to prevent the

[1] Zeno's successor, Anastasius, nearly lost his throne, and his life, in one of the tumults caused by these religious questions—this time the question being whether 'one of the Persons of the Trinity had been crucified or not.' He was in hiding for three days and had to beg for his life, in the attitude of a suppliant and stripped of his insignia, before a raving mob of fanatics.

tumults usual at papal elections by causing the Prefect to summon the electing body (not in that age limited to the Cardinals) and by insisting that no election should be valid without his sanction; and it was his candidate, Felix II, who was elected. This interference in the affairs of the Church is viewed with sorrow and indignation by some writers. It is true that the Eastern Emperors had sometimes arrogated to themselves authority not merely in the election of prelates but even in the definition and promulgation of dogmas; and at Rome Honorius had decided between two rival Popes. But Odovacar was a barbarian and an Arian, and his strong and successful policy is stigmatized as the beginning of the long and disastrous feud between the temporal ambitions of the Church and the legitimate powers of the State, whereas, had it been worthily imitated, a vast amount of bloodshed and mutual hatred might have been prevented, and the fair name of Christianity might have been spared a great deal of the terrible defilement that it has suffered by religious persecution and by war waged in the name of the Gospel of Peace.

The truth is that from amidst the ruins of imperial Rome was arising, under the name of the Papacy, a new political power —nominally spiritual, but essentially temporal in its nature and ideals—which, claiming as its ally the religious and moral sense of mankind and armed with all the weapons that superstition supplies, was able to hold the field for centuries against the highest civil authority. In this the history of Christendom differs radically from that of Islam, where from the first the highest religious and the highest civic authority were combined in a single person; for, whatever other evils resulted from this system, there could be no question of a purely spiritual influence degenerating into a political institution whose chief aim was the acquisition of temporal power, and thus coming into conflict with legally constituted civic authority.

In spite of Odovacar's wise and not unsuccessful rule, in spite of his efforts to neutralize the evils of large estates (*latifundia*), to which Pliny the Elder attributes the ruin of Italy, the state of many parts of his kingdom seems to have

been pitiable. Thus in a letter of Pope Gelasius (492) we read that in Tuscany and Emilia and other provinces 'hardly a human being exists'—*hominum prope nullus exsistit.* In Rome also the working people—the city mechanics and the *scholae* of builders, painters, physicians, etc.—had sunk into a state of destitution and neglect, from which they were later with difficulty aroused for a time by the favouring patronage of Theoderic.

About 486 happened that which was apparently the immediate cause of Odovacar's overthrow. In Noricum the hermit-saint Severinus (p. 116) had died, and the land had relapsed into anarchy. The wild German tribe of the Rugi, who dwelt in what is now Moravia and Southern Bohemia, beyond the Danube, incited probably by Zeno, took the opportunity to press southwards, pillaging and devastating the country. Odovacar marched across the Alps with a large army of barbarians and Italians, and after defeating the Rugi in Noricum followed them up across the Danube and took their king prisoner. But the king's son escaped and took refuge with the Ostrogoths, who at this time occupied the great region between Noricum and Dacia—the country of the Save and Drave, extending northwards to the Danube. The chieftain of these Ostrogoths was Theoderic the Amal, a man of about thirty-two years of age. For some time past Theoderic's army had been a growing menace to the Eastern Empire. He had been suggesting the invasion of Italy to Zeno, or perhaps listening to the suggestions of Zeno, who was longing not only to suppress Odovacar but also to check the insolence of the Popes. The entreaties of the young prince of Rugiland now turned the balance, and Theoderic determined to attack Odovacar. This he did nominally under the mandate of the Eastern Emperor. He was invested with the title of Patrician [1] —the same title that Zeno had informally granted to Odovacar

[1] Zeno had been dethroned and expelled during 475–77 by Basiliscus (brother of the dowager-Empress Verina, and commander of the ill-fated expedition against Gaiseric, for which see p. 112) and had been restored partly by the help of Theoderic, then a young man of twenty-three years, whom he adopted as his son, giving him the titles of Patrician and Consul.

—and he had under his command an imperial general (*magister militum*) and other imperial officials (*comites*, or 'counts'). His openly professed object was to attack the usurper or 'tyrant' and recover Italy for the Empire.

During the autumn, winter, and spring of 488–89 a great host of various peoples, but mainly composed of Ostrogoths, probably about 200,000 in all, with some 50,000 fighting men, led by Theoderic, crossed the Julian Alps, evidently starting from Aemona (Laybach) and using the same mountain route that had been used by Theodosius, Alaric, and Attila. On the river Sontius (Isonzo) near Aquileia, and again on the Athĕsis (Adige) near Verona, battles were fought in which, though Odovacar was forced to retreat, great losses were suffered by the Goths, and Theoderic, instead of pushing southward over the Apennines, made his way to Milan and then took up his quarters at Ticinum (later Papia, now Pavia). Then, it is said by some writers, Odovacar hastened to fortify himself in Rome, but found the city gates closed against him. Whether or not this occurred, it seems certain that at the news from North Italy the Roman Senate and the ecclesiastics made overtures to Theoderic, for of late years Odovacar had caused great embitterment by plundering Church property in order to pay his troops. Some writers also speak of the desertion to Theoderic of Tufa, Odovacar's *magister militum*; but it seems likely that the desertion was feigned, and that Tufa succeeded in bringing over to Odovacar's camp a number of Theoderic's Goths. Anyhow, a little later we find Odovacar vigorously holding his own in North Italy—occupying Milan, and with the aid of Burgundians, whom he had summoned to his help, compelling Theoderic to keep himself within the walls of Ticinum, where the great multitude of his followers suffered much from want of space and of food.

But at this juncture (490) the Visigoths from Gaul came to the rescue of their fellow Goths, and Odovacar suffered a crushing defeat near the river Adda. He retired to the stronghold of Ravenna, which was soon beleaguered by Theoderic on the land side. But the port afforded free access to the

sea, as the Goths possessed no fleet, and on account of its marshes and strong ramparts Ravenna was not easy to storm. Thus for three years, although he seems to have been recognized as master in every other part of Italy, Theoderic was defied [1] by the city which afterwards was the capital of his kingdom and which is still so closely associated with his name.

At last, early in the year 493, Odovacar was compelled to propose capitulation—for the Goths had seized the maritime stronghold of Rimini and had collected enough vessels to blockade Ravenna also from the sea. We know scarcely anything of the terms of the capitulation,[2] except that they certainly assured Odovacar's life. Nevertheless—as was so often the case in Italian history—this condition was violated, seeing that about three weeks later Theoderic invited his prisoner to a banquet in that Palace of the Council which, says an old writer, 'was in the south-east corner of Ravenna' (just possibly the building which is still pointed out as the Palace of Theoderic), and on his arrival had him assassinated. Or perhaps he finished the bloody and treacherous deed himself; for this is stated by one chronicler (John of Antioch), who adds the dramatic detail that when the sword of Theoderic had cleft almost clean asunder the body of his victim 'from the collar to the loin,' he turned and grimly smiling muttered: 'The wretched creature seems to have no bones.'

2. The Ostrogothic Domination (493–535)

As Theoderic and much that is connected with Theoderic will form the subject of later chapters, only a brief account of his long reign of thirty-three years need here be given.

After the battle on the Adda (490) he sent news of his victory to Constantinople, and asked permission to assume the kingly

[1] The ancient German ballad *Rabenschlacht*, or *Strit vor Rabene* ('Raven-battle,' or 'Fight in front of Ravenna'), is founded on memories of the bloody sallies made by Odovacar; but in the ballad the times of Attila and Odovacar are hopelessly confounded.

[2] Procopius (*Bell. Goth.* i, 1) uses a Thucydidean expression (ἐπὶ τῇ ἴσῃ καὶ ὁμοίᾳ) in such curious context that it is not certain whether he wishes to tell us, as Gibbon believes, that 'the hostile kings consented to rule with equal authority the provinces of Italy.' This seems quite incredible.

title; but Zeno died in April of 491, and as his successor, Anastasius,[1] sent no reply, Theoderic allowed his men to proclaim him king. By this act he of course forfeited the insignia and office of an imperial delegate and put himself in much the same position as that which the 'tyrant' Odovacar had held. But in course of time Anastasius, impressed, it seems, with the masterful government of the Ostrogoth king, found it advisable to recognize the *fait accompli* and to make the best of the situation. When therefore some seven years later (498) another embassy arrived at the Eastern court, it was graciously received, and was charged to take back to Theoderic the imperial insignia, which the Roman Senate had sent to Zeno in the name of Odovacar. Of course this did not mean that Anastasius recognized Theoderic as Emperor of the West. What it did mean, and what the real position of Theoderic was, will be discussed later, when we review his legislation and government.

Gradually but surely Theoderic consolidated and extended his power. By 504 we find that he not only is ruler of all the former realm of Odovacar, namely, Italy, Rhaetia, and Dalmatia, but has subdued Noricum and Pannonia and has aided a descendant of Attila to organize something like a temporary revival of the Hunnish kingdom in the old territories of the Ostrogoths in Dacia and to inflict a crushing defeat on the army of the Eastern Emperor. Nor did Theoderic—even while writing with imperturbable gravity the most loyal and submissive letters [2] to Anastasius—shrink from invading what was still unquestionably imperial territory, for he not only captured Sirmium, on the Danube, but advanced into Illyricum. Hereupon Anastasius, much incensed, dispatched (in 508) a fleet of two hundred vessels to assault Tarentum and ravage the

[1] Anastasius was an old and respected 'domestic of the palace'—a ἡσυχοποιός ('husher,' silence-keeper) of the imperial chambers—on whom Zeno's widow, Ariadne (daughter of Leo I and Verina), conferred her hand and the imperial title. He reigned nearly twenty-eight years.

[2] He calls the Emperor the 'guardian [bulwark] of the universe,' and assures him that his own rule is only a 'humble imitation of the one great Empire.'

coasts of Southern Italy—a foolish reprisal that attained nothing but what a contemporary writer (Marcellino Conte) calls a 'dishonourable victory of Romans over Romans,' seeing that the people of Apulia and Calabria were in no wise responsible for the acts of Theoderic. Also towards the West the overlordship, and also the territory, of Theoderic had become widely extended. Probably from fear lest Anastasius should incite others against him as he had been incited against Odovacar, he had made alliances with the three most powerful barbarian nations, giving his sister Amalafrida to Thrasamund, the king of the Vandals,[1] and his daughter Theudegotha to Alaric II, king of the Visigoths, and another daughter, Ostrogotha, to Sigismund, son of the Burgundian king. Moreover he himself had married, apparently about 497, Audefleda, the daughter of the powerful and aggressive Chlodovech (Chlodwig, Ludwig, Clovis), king of the Franks.

When we come to the days of Charles the Great we shall trace the rise of this nation and empire of the Franks. Here it suffices to say that they had of late years advanced rapidly from what is now the Netherlands, and under Clovis (as we may most conveniently call him) had spread over all the north of Gaul and had vanquished the Burgundians. When, however, Clovis proceeded to attack the Visigoths—whose vast kingdom extended over all the south of Gaul and most of Spain—Theoderic came to the help of his fellow Goths and obliged Clovis, his father-in-law, to raise the siege of Arles and to withdraw beyond the Loire (*c.* 509), after a defeat in which, according to Jordanes, he lost 30,000 men. Theoderic now held the supreme authority in the Visigoth kingdom—his son-in-law, Alaric II, having been killed in battle. He constituted himself regent and guardian of the heir, his infant grandson Amalaric, and thus became the virtual sovereign of the whole Visigoth dominions in Gaul and Spain, besides being the acknowledged King of Italy, Sicily, Rhaaeti, Pannonia, Dalmatia, and also of Provence, which he had annexed to his

[1] Lilybaeum, the last Vandal possession in Sicily, was given over as dowry, and claimed later by the Goths.

Italian kingdom. For some sixteen years (510–26) he was master of a larger and fairer portion of the Western Empire than that which was subject to some of the later Western Emperors, and, as we shall see later, he regarded himself as a 'Romanus Princeps' and was addressed, informally at least, as an 'Augustus,' although he continued to write in the most humble and submissive style to the Eastern Emperor.

But the last years of the great Ostrogoth king were destined to be unhappy. Discords on doctrinal questions, the disastrous effects of which we have already so often traced, resulted in an ever-deepening hostility against him, and this roused in the depths of his barbarian nature the most savage resentment. He became moody and embittered and suspicious. At first, like Odovacar, although he was an Arian, he had sided with the Pope against the execrated attempt of the Emperor Zeno to bring about reconciliation between Catholics and Monophysites. (It will be remembered that Zeno's unfortunate *Henotikon*—the Appeal for Unity made by him and the patriarch Acacius—had been denounced by the Church of Rome as a work of Satan, although it had been signed by all the bishops of the Eastern Empire.) After Zeno's death (491) these quarrels became still more intense, and we have already seen his successor, Anastasius, begging for his life before a mob of Constantinopolitan fanatics. All this time Theoderic seems to have steered a prudent course and to have played off skilfully three consecutive Popes against the Eastern Emperor—thus securing, although himself an Arian, the favour of his Catholic subjects.

But a sudden change took place in these relations when Anastasius died in 518. He was succeeded by Justin—an uneducated, valorous, simple-minded, and stolidly orthodox Dardanian (Bulgarian) peasant, who not long after his election began to be strongly influenced by his far more gifted and equally orthodox nephew, Justinian, afterwards in his own opinion a very conspicuous pillar of what he himself held to be the one true Church. At the court of Constantinople the Monophysite heresy and other questionable doctrines suddenly

fell into great disrepute, and persecution soon began to raise its head. At Rome Pope Hormisdas, less accommodating than his predecessors, offered a cold reception to the friendly advances and the church-building zeal of the Arian Theoderic and entered into negotiations with Justin and his masterful nephew with a view to anathematizing tolerance of heretics. Ere long Theoderic finds Pope and Emperor allied against him, and this alliance is formally confirmed by a Council, held at Constantinople and attended by envoys from the Pope, at which Catholic Uniformity is proclaimed as the Rule for the Empire, and the *Henotikon* is solemnly condemned, and its co-author, the patriarch Acacius, is solemnly anathematized.

About 523 the order arrived from Justin that all Arian churches were to be given up to the Catholics. Theoderic retaliated by shutting up Catholic churches. His irritation was extreme. The one great object of his government and legislation during thirty years had been to weld Goths and Romans together into a single nation, and he had himself adopted many Roman habits and professed a profound admiration for the laws, the literature, and the monuments of the Roman Empire. But his well-meant and doubtless sometimes rather uncouth affectation of Roman customs, language, and ideals excited the ridicule of the native Italians, among whom, especially among the rich, arose a strong movement in favour of Nationalism and Catholicism, as a protest against the alien Gothic invader whose overbearing soldiery had appropriated the best of their lands and the best of their churches and the best of their official dignities and emoluments. Embittered by this ever-increasing hostility and disdain, Theoderic seems to have cast scornfully aside his perhaps somewhat superficial admiration for things Roman, and to have followed the dictates of that innate German savagery which he revealed in his murder of Odovacar. His wrath against the Catholics was fanned by the fanatic zeal of his son-in-law, Eutharic, a ferocious Arian, to whom he had given his only unmarried daughter, the heir to his throne, Amalasuntha.[1] His

[1] See Lineage of Theoderic, p. 172.

10. Baptistery of the Orthodox
Ravenna

unpopularity spread and deepened rapidly, and acts of violence were met first by acts of just repression—as when Ravenna Catholics burnt down the Jews' synagogue and were made to rebuild it—and then by acts of savage reprisal. At Rome the ill-feeling against the barbarian heretics became especially virulent, so that orders were issued to the Goths that no citizen should be allowed to use any sort of weapon—*usque ad cultellum.*

That there should be, so to speak, pro-Goths among the very mixed population of Rome (far more mixed in these days than it was when Juvenal exclaimed that the "Syrian Orontes had poured its flood into the Tiber') is not surprising. The tragic story of the accusation brought by one such 'delator' against a patrician, Albinus, and of the consequent ruin and death (524) of the philosopher Boëthius and his father-in-law Symmachus, the head of the Roman Senate, will be found in a later chapter. It throws a lurid light on the last two years of the reign of Theoderic and makes less unintelligible another act of savagery which he perpetrated shortly before his death. Pope Hormisdas had died (523) and had been succeeded by a worthy but uncompromisingly anti-Arian prelate, John the First. Incensed at the action of the Constantinople Council and at Justin's order for the closure of Arian churches in Italy, Theoderic resolved to send a strong remonstrance to the Eastern Emperor. He summoned Pope John to Ravenna and dispatched him, together with several senators and the Arian Archbishop of Ravenna, Ecclesius,[1] to demand from Justin a repeal of his order. The embassy was received with honour at the city gate and conducted in festal procession to Constantine's basilica of Hagia Sophia—soon to be rebuilt as S. Sofia—the Emperor paying special reverence to the first Pope who had ever entered Constantinople. But Theoderic's demands were refused or evaded, and on the return of the envoys the Pope, who was evidently suspected of collusion with the Emperor, was thrown into prison, where soon afterwards he died. 'The grateful Church,' says

[1] Perhaps before he became Archbishop, which was possibly on his return in 526. He was the builder of S. Vitale. See p. 203.

Gregorovius, 'has honoured him with the nimbus of a martyr.' To fill his place Theoderic proposed, or perhaps commanded, the election of Felix (some say the Third, some the Fourth). The Romans trembled and obeyed.

We have already seen how Odovacar wisely attempted to control the disorders that were wont to accompany papal elections. Theoderic's assumption of the right of investiture, not merely of bishops but of the Vicar of Christ himself, was something of quite another nature, and as this right—anyhow the right of veto—was assumed also by Theoderic's successors, and by Belisarius, who with the help of Theodora deposed and elected Popes, and—in spite of his Pragmatic Sanction—by Justinian, who imprisoned the refractory Pope Vigilius, and later by various potentates of the so-called Holy Roman Empire, it may be regarded as a veritable *fons et origo mali*. Theoderic died in 526, some three months after the decease in prison of Pope John. Fantastic legends about the king's death are recorded seriously by Procopius and Gregory the Great. These stories will be given in the next chapter. The real cause of his death was probably an attack of dysentery, and an old writer affirms that it took place on the very day when the king's decree for giving over the Catholic churches to the Arians was to come into force—a curious parallel to the story of the death of Arius himself (p. 45). The chronicler Jordanes, whose facts are taken from the lost *History* of Cassiodorus, the chief minister of Theoderic, describes the death of the king as peaceful and dignified. Before the end he summoned his ministers and the chief men of the Ostrogoths and presented to them as his successor his grandson Athalaric—for Eutharic, his son-in-law, had died.

Athalaric was a boy of ten. His mother Amalasuntha was therefore made regent, with Cassiodorus as her minister. She is described as both beautiful and learned—equally at home in Gothic, Greek, and Latin and devoted to classical literature; and a favourable impression of her character is made on us by the fact that she caused the confiscated property of Boëthius and Symmachus to be restored to their families. But her

Romanizing proclivities finally proved her ruin. The Goths, contemptuous of all such effeminate pursuits, became clamorous in their demands that the young Athalaric should give up the studies chosen for him by his mother and have an athletic and military education, asserting that it was a maxim of Theoderic that no man could ever face boldly the sword of an enemy who had trembled at the ferule of a pedagogue; and the matter came to a climax when one day they discovered the lad weeping after receiving a blow from his teacher, or his mother. Military education, however, seems to have given him opportunities of self-indulgence which ruined his weakly health, and after eight years of nominal kingship he died (534) before he had come of age or had been crowned.

It was, says Gibbon, a fundamental maxim of the Goths that the succession should never pass from the lance to the distaff. The next male heir was Amalasuntha's cousin, Theudehad, or Theodahad, as he calls himself on his coins (see Plate I), although he is better known by a Graeco-Roman corruption of his name, viz. 'Theodatus.' He was the son of Theoderic's sister Amalafrida, who, as we have seen, married the Vandal king Thrasamund.[1] He was a zealous student of Plato and had vast estates in Tuscany, where he was hated by the natives for his land-grabbing; and he in his turn hated Amalasuntha for attempting to curb his avarice and accused her of violating the law by retaining the regency. In this he was supported by three of the most influential Gothic nobles, and her unpopularity became ere long so alarming to her that she appealed to the Eastern Emperor—who was now Justin's nephew, Justinian. He put at her disposal a splendid palace at Dyrrachium (Durazzo), whither she began to transport her treasures; but at the last moment, perhaps (though one is very loth to believe it of her) because she had succeeded in getting the three hostile nobles assassinated, she gave up her intended flight and offered to share the government with her

[1] See p. 130. Gibbon makes Theodahad the son of Thrasamund and thus half a Vandal. Villari says he was the son of a Goth who married Amalafrida after Thrasamund's death. But Thrasamund died in 523, so that in this case Theodahad in 534 could only have been about ten years of age!

cousin. The offer was accepted, and her minister, Cassiodorus, wrote a magniloquent letter in her name to Justinian, informing him that 'as the human body has two ears, two eyes, and two hands, so the Gothic kingdom had now two sovereigns.'

This dual sovereignty soon came to an end. Theodahad's masculine policy and the hostility of the Gothic nobility gained the ascendant and Amalasuntha was relegated to a small island in the lake of Bolsena, where a short time afterwards (535) she was found strangled in her bath. The murder was committed perhaps by avengers of the three Gothic nobles above mentioned, and certainly with the knowledge of Theodahad.[1] This event, though it does not mark the actual end of the Gothic domination, which was gradually extinguished, was the immediate cause of the so-called Gothic War, which resulted in the expulsion of the Northern conquerors and the temporary possession by the Eastern Emperor of the 'diocese' of Italy, in which Rome and Ravenna were merely the capitals of two Byzantine provinces. And it is to be remembered that during this period Justinian was also the ruler of the whole of the provinces in North Africa, as well as of Sicily and other Mediterranean islands and the south of Spain—most of which countries his generals had recovered from the domination of the Vandals—and that he had purchased from the Persians with a vast expenditure the so-called 'endless Peace,' which for a time ensured tranquillity to his provinces in the far East—Asia Minor and Syria and Egypt.

It is remarked by Gregorovius, who is an ardent admirer of the famous Ostrogothic king, that the extinction of Theoderic's dynasty and of the Gothic domination in Italy was due to the too great contrast between the vigorous Northern spirit and the effete spirit of ancient civilization. To such minds even the temporary re-establishment of the old Southern influences, especially in the degenerate semi-Oriental form of Byzantinism, is regarded as a great calamity; nor can it be denied that the campaigns of Belisarius and Narses against the

[1] Procopius says that it was instigated by the Empress Theodora, jealous of Amalasuntha's beauty!

Goths brought great misery on Italy. But, if for her future greatness in art and literature and for her final *risorgimento* Italy needed union with a Northern race, would the nobly conceived but vain attempt of Theoderic to weld into one the Italian and Ostrogothic races, had it been granted success, have accomplished what was accomplished by the Lombards and Franks?

3. The Gothic War (535–53)

The Byzantine conquest of Italy may conveniently be regarded as consisting of two periods, the first extending from the arrival of Belisarius until his capture of Ravenna and his recall in 540; the other from that date (or the revival of the war in 542) until the battle on Mount Vesuvius, the death of Theia, and the expulsion of the Goths in 553. These two periods include a great part of the long reign of Justinian, and in histories of Italy much space is sometimes given to his personality, to his legislation, to the court of Constantinople, and to the war in which his general, Belisarius, overthrew the Vandal power in Africa. Remarks on these subjects and a few others connected with the period will be found in later chapters. Here I shall confine myself chiefly to events connected closely with Italy.

The murder of Amalasuntha was made by Justinian a *casus belli*. It is likely that he had long meditated an attack on the Goths, and his policy in regard to Amalasuntha had shown clearly how strong were his sympathies with the Romanizing and anti-Gothic movement in Italy. And now he found himself in a position to act, for his great general Belisarius,[1] having completed his victorious campaign in Persia (530), had overthrown the Vandal power in North Africa by the capture

[1] He first came into notice by suppressing the dangerous 'Nika' tumult, for which see Index. His name perhaps means 'White Prince' (Beli-tsar). Procopius was with him in Africa. Justinian had invented a *casus belli* against the Vandals by siding with the expelled king Hilderic, who had put to death Amalafrida, Theoderic's sister, and widow of the late king Thrasamund—an act that of course occasioned the fierce hostility of the Goths against the Vandals.

of Carthage (533) and of king Gelimer, who, after wandering about among the desert tribes for some time in great destitution, had given himself up to the victor and was led through the streets of Constantinople in a triumphal procession which was also rendered notable by the presence of the thrice-captured spoils of the Temple of Jerusalem.

In order to threaten North Italy and thus divide the Gothic forces Justinian sent an army into Dalmatia, and with only about 7500 fighters Belisarius crossed (535) from Africa to Sicily. He depended mainly, as he told his secretary Procopius, on his mounted bowmen, a kind of light cavalry strange to the Goths. But with such a small body of men he could never have hoped to succeed had he not relied on very considerable support from the Italian people, who were becoming daily more impatient of the Gothic domination. Indeed, as soon as he landed in Sicily all the cities except Palermo opened their gates to him. In Palermo was a strong Gothic garrison, but the archers of Belisarius poured their shafts into the city from their lofty vessels and the city capitulated. In seven months all Sicily was won, and the unwarlike, Plato-loving Theodahad was so consternated that he offered to abdicate and retire on a big pension. The offer was accepted, but, hearing of some small advantage gained by his troops in Dalmatia, he began to haggle. While he was still hesitating, Belisarius, who had meanwhile flashed across to Africa like his predecessors, the *fulmina belli*, *Scipiadae*, and had suppressed a rebellion and was back again in Sicily, crossed over to the mainland, where Rhegium was betrayed to him by Theodahad's son-in-law and other cities opened their gates. Naples however resisted; but ere long it was captured and sacked, a body of about 600 imperialists having wormed their way into the city through an unused aqueduct.

Among the Goths at Rome great consternation prevailed, as well as indignation against their craven king. They held an assembly in the Campagna and deposed him. A valorous soldier, Vitiges (or Witigis), was elected in his stead. Theodahad fled towards Ravenna, but he was overtaken by a personal

enemy and slain. Vitiges also, from other motives, hastened to reach Ravenna; leaving in Rome a garrison of 4000 Goths. From Ravenna he sent envoys to the Franks, securing their neutrality by a large bribe and the cession of Gallia Narbonensis (Languedoc). Then he summoned in hot haste all the Gothic troops and auxiliaries that were in Provence and North-west Italy. But ere they were assembled Belisarius had entered Rome—doubtless aided by the enthusiastic support [1] of the native Italians and formally invited, it is said, by Pope Silverius—and as his men marched in through the Porta Asinaria the Goths marched out northwards by the Flaminian Gate. He at once set to work to repair the old fortifications of Aurelian and to provision the city for a siege. Then Vitiges, who had collected 150,000 fighters, came sweeping down on Rome, where the whole imperial army now amounted (according to Procopius) to only 5000 men—a small force to defend twelve miles of fortification. In an engagement outside the walls Belisarius is overwhelmed by numbers and nearly perishes, the Romans having shut the city gate in his face; but he repels the Goths with a desperate assault and re-enters Rome; and here he is besieged for a year and nine days (537–38).

The incidents of this long siege need not be detailed. Stratagems, engines of war, alarms, surprises, assaults, desperate sallies, Homeric combats—such things enter largely into the vivid picture given us by Procopius. Vitiges cuts the aqueducts, pollutes the river with corpses (an old Vandal custom), captures the Port, brings up his movable towers and catapults and rams, and on one occasion nearly captures Hadrian's Mole; but he is repelled by showers of marble statues, with a loss (as Procopius gravely asserts) of 30,000, and although his army still numbers 150,000 men (probably another huge exaggeration) he is unable to prevent the arrival of provisions or of reinforcements from Constantinople—1600 horsemen, mainly Huns, as well as Isaurian and other barbarian auxiliaries. Indeed, the siege must have been at times very

[1] Procopius, whose sympathies were of course Byzantine, ignores this, evidently lest it should diminish the merits of Belisarius.

ineffective, for we hear of Procopius being sent to Naples to fetch more reinforcements and provisions, which he succeeds in doing. The wife too of Belisarius, Antonina, arrived in Rome safely and with apparent ease, and was soon followed by a prelate, Vigilius,[1] sent from Constantinople by the Empress Theodora, who requested Belisarius to have him elected Pope —the fulfilment of which request was without difficulty attained by accusing poor old Silverius of complicity with the Goths.

Tired out by their vain attempts, the Goths at last proposed conditions. They reminded Belisarius that Theoderic had been sent to Italy to recover it from the tyrant Odovacar, and that he had always acknowledged the Emperor as his overlord and had honoured and kept the laws of the Empire. Wherefore, then, they asked, did Justinian make war on them? If Belisarius would leave Italy, taking with him all his plunder, they would be satisfied. When these proposals met with a blank refusal, Vitiges offered to renounce Sicily and South Italy and even to pay a tribute; but the response was again an absolute negative. At last a three months' truce was concluded, and Belisarius used it unfairly, not only for revictualling, refortifying, and reinforcing, but for seizing various points which the Goths had temporarily vacated according to agreement. Moreover an officer, Johannes by name, was sent by him with a strong force to ravage Picenum and succeeded in surprising and capturing the stronghold of Rimini, so that the Goths, indignant at such proceedings, attempted to force their way into Rome. They were however repulsed, and at once burnt their camp (March 538), raised the siege, and withdrew northwards.

The forces that Belisarius had brought over from Africa amounted only to 7500 men, if we are to believe Procopius, who, like Polybius of old, accompanied the conqueror of Carthage in his victorious campaigns. The enthusiasm of the Italians seems to have added little or nothing to the number of his fighters, and he felt unable to follow up closely the retreat of

[1] Later imprisoned on an island near Constantinople by Justinian. See Index.

the Goths. He therefore waited until reinforcements should arrive from Constantinople. The main body of these reinforcements landed in the autumn of 538 on the coast of Picenum, probably at Ancona, Fano, or Pesaro, not far to the south of the stronghold of Rimini, which, as above mentioned, had been occupied by imperial troops under the command of Johannes. By this time Belisarius had sent up the Flaminian road a body of 2000 men, who had forced the famous tunnelled pass [1] over the eastern ridge of the Apennines, routing the Goths that held it, and had reached Rimini; and ere long he followed, and formed a junction with the newly arrived forces.

These forces were commanded by Narses, a clever, ambitious, fiery-tempered, restless, round-backed little man who as palace eunuch had gained the confidence of Justinian (though not the favour of Theodora—her favourite being Belisarius) and had risen to high and responsible offices. He was already sixty years of age, and when put in command of this important expedition was entirely without any military experience, but was destined ere long to prove his natural gifts as a great leader of men. Knowing the ill-feeling against Belisarius that prevailed at Constantinople, he adopted an independent and disdainful attitude, insisting on his equality in authority and scornfully thwarting the antiquated strategy of his junior in years, the victor of the Vandals and the defender of Rome. And doubtless Belisarius, though only thirty-four years of age, was a soldier of the old school, somewhat stiff and exclusive, whereas Narses seems to have had special gifts for attracting men to his service, as is evident from the great numbers of Italians and barbarians who flocked to his standard in the later years of the war. Moreover the counsel of Narses, which on this occasion overrode that of Belisarius, was right, as the result proved, and this probably aggravated the quarrel. As

[1] The *Petra pertusa*, now the Passo di Furlo (Lat. *forulus*), where a tunnel of about 110 feet pierces the rock in a narrow ravine. Vespasian had it made, as the ancient inscription over the north entrance tells us. In the vicinity is the river Metaurus, near which Hasdrubal was slain, and Urbino, Raffael's birthplace.

Narses advised, the combined imperialist forces advanced sweeping the country northwards, whereupon the Goths retreated; and finally Vitiges drew together all his fighters, some 30,000 men, within the walls of Ravenna.

As we saw in the case of Odovacar, Ravenna was a very difficult place to capture, especially without a fleet, and as concerted action was impossible with such divided counsels and a divided army, the siege was not attempted. While time was thus being wasted in minor operations against small towns, the Franks, responding to the appeal of Vitiges, came pouring down into Italy, accompanied by thousands of Burgundians. Milan, garrisoned by a small band of imperialists, was forced to capitulate, and was burnt and razed to the ground.[1] If we may believe Procopius, 300,000 Milanese were massacred, and the women given over as slaves to the Burgundians. This was followed (539) by a still greater invasion. A host of 100,000 Franks under their king Theudebert, grandson of Clovis, crossed the Alps, nominally to aid the Goths, but really for the sake of plunder. They sacked Ticinum (Pavia) and almost annihilated the inhabitants. But finding the whole country devastated and suffering from dysentery, caused by drinking the water of the Ticinus or the Po, or that marshy Pavian country in the midst of whose rice-fields the Certosa now stands, they suddenly determined to return to Gaul, and disappeared.[2]

Justinian at this crisis recalled Narses. Perhaps he wanted his counsel regarding the insolence of Chosroes, the great Persian king, who was giving trouble in spite of the 'endless Peace.' Perhaps he had begun to realize that the divided command in Italy was a mistake. Belisarius was thus given a free hand, and, after capturing the strongholds of Fiesole and

[1] The ancient S. Ambrogio was probably razed or burnt. A bit of the old doors (p. 60) is still shown. The present building is Romanesque and dates from about 900. The oldest church in Milan, S. Lorenzo, of Byzantine model and copied from S. Vitale (Ravenna), was built *c.* 560, twenty years after this disaster, during Byzantine supremacy.

[2] We shall find them reappearing a few years later (554) and sweeping in meteoric course through the whole length of the peninsula, down to Otranto—and again suddenly vanishing.

Osimo (near Ancona), he laid siege to Ravenna, hoping for the aid of Byzantine vessels to blockade the port. Justinian however was urgent for peace, negotiating with Vitiges, who was relying on, and yet dreading, the fulfilment of Theudebert's promise to return with 500,000 men. But Belisarius was determined to take Ravenna, and Vitiges, discouraged by the desertion of many of his Goths and the loss of his grain-stores, which had been set on fire by lightning or by the treachery of his own wife,[1] at last proposed to acknowledge Belisarius as king of Italy, or even as Western Emperor. This proposal Belisarius affected to accept. The gates were opened, and the Byzantines (as we may perhaps call the imperial forces) entered the city between lines of Ravennate spectators, who, disgusted and indignant when they saw the small numbers and the insignificant stature of their conquerors as compared with the numbers and size of their defenders, broke out into execration —the women, says Procopius, spitting in the faces of their Gothic lovers and husbands. Belisarius had promised to spare the lives and property of the conquered, and he kept his word; but he treated Vitiges and his chief nobles as prisoners. Ravenna thus passed, in 540, into the power of the Eastern Emperors. It remained in their power, as capital of the Byzantine Exarchate,[2] during nearly two centuries, until the Lombards captured it in 752. Four years later it was wrested from the Lombards by Pippin the Frank.

At this juncture, when Belisarius might have finished the war had he been worthily supported by Justinian, he was suddenly recalled to Constantinople. Thither he returned, taking with him much spoil and his captives, Vitiges and a train of Gothic nobles, to adorn his triumph, as seven years before the Vandal Gelimer and the spoils of Carthage had done.

* * * * *

[1] Gibbon attributes it to machinations of Belisarius, and says that he also (like the Vandals—from whom he may have learnt it) employed both at Ravenna and at Osimo the odious method of poisoning the waters with drugs and with dead bodies.

[2] Belisarius and Narses had not the title of Exarch, which appears first about 584. See Index.

With the recall of Belisarius terminates the first period of the Gothic War (535–40). During these five years the Goths had been expelled, except a few isolated garrisons, from the whole of the peninsula. They were now limited to the northern regions of Italy—Liguria, and parts of Emilia and Venetia, retaining strongholds in Pavia, Verona, and some other cities. Many of their fighters had gone over to the imperialists. Rome and Ravenna had become provincial cities of the Byzantine Empire. But eleven years of war and devastation were yet to come before the dread of Gothic domination was entirely at an end.

The state of Italy at the end of the first period of the war was very pitiable, especially in those northern regions that had been devastated by the Franks and Burgundians as well as by the Goths and the Byzantines. The inhabitants of Tuscany and Emilia took to the mountains and lived on acorns, or flocked to the seashore to search for fish and refuse. Fifty thousand of them perished, says Procopius, who was an eye-witness of many horrors and describes with Thucydidean vividness the poor famished wretches with eyes glaring in madness, their protruding bones covered with skin like parchment that turned from yellow to deep red and from red to black—so that neither birds nor beasts would feed on the corpses. He asserts too that cannibalism was frequent, as when the Vandals invaded Spain (p. 86), and he tells a story of two women who, near Rimini, offered entertainment to travellers and killed seventeen in their sleep—in order to feed upon them—but were detected and killed by the eighteenth.

When Belisarius arrived he found himself no longer in favour at the court of Constantinople. He was not allowed a public triumph. He was sent off to the far East, where the irrepressible Persian king, Chosroes, had been invading imperial territory and had captured and sacked Antioch. Then, on some frivolous charge of treasonable language, he was recalled, and found himself in still deeper disfavour. His wife, Antonina, had been dishonouring him by her conduct and had become

an intimate *confidente* of the Empress Theodora, the scandalous indecencies of whose earlier life were being slowly obliterated by the piety of her latter days. The favour that Theodora had formerly conferred upon him had been transferred to his unfaithful wife, and when he attempted to arrest his wife—or perhaps even to imprison her—she was liberated by the influence of the Empress, who took every opportunity of humiliating and disgracing him.[1]

Meanwhile in Italy discontent and disorder prevailed. Not only the people but the imperial army itself, neglected and unpaid, began to regret the Gothic domination, while among the Goths themselves, after two unsuccessful selections, self-confidence was renewed by the choice of a chief, Baduila or Baduela,[2] generally called Totila, under whose leadership the Gothic power in Italy was to revive and hold the field for eleven years more.

So low had the fortunes of Belisarius sunk that he lived in hourly dread of assassination. Solitary and gloomy he wandered, it is said, about the streets of Constantinople, avoided by all his acquaintances. At last, in 544, Justinian, anxious about Italy and perhaps terrified by the ravages of the great Plague,[3] which seems to have reached Constantinople about 544, proposed that Belisarius should reassume the command of the war against the Ostrogoths. But no troops were put at his disposal. At his own cost therefore he raised a band of 4000 Illyrians. With these he crossed to Ravenna, and succeeded in capturing Bologna.

Meanwhile Totila had made himself master of a great part of South Italy, and, encamped at Tibur (Tivoli), was threatening

[1] The character of Antonina, as painted by Procopius in his *Anecdota* (p. 183) and copied in still more vivid colours by Gibbon, is, we may hope, much calumniated. She certainly was frivolous, and probably worse, but she also showed great courage, loyalty, and vigour in sharing her husband's fortunes in Italy. Theodora, too, behaved on several occasions with far more manly courage than did Justinian—who more than once wished to run away from Constantinople.

[2] So called on his coins. See Plate I, 21. *Totila* was perhaps a title or *sobriquet* ('Tod-los,' *i.e.* 'Deathless'!), but it may be better to retain its use.

[3] Justinian himself was attacked, but recovered.

Rome, held by imperial troops under Bessa, and was capturing and garrisoning strongholds on the Flaminian Way, which led from Rome to Rimini, so as to block the road against succours from the north. For a year Belisarius, longing to hasten to the relief of Rome, was forced to look on in powerless despair, sending urgent appeals to Justinian for reinforcements, and even going across to Durazzo in order to await their arrival. But when at last they did arrive they proved ill-trained and insubordinate, and the officer in command—the same Johannes who had formerly thwarted the plans of Belisarius almost as obstinately as Narses himself—insisted on first expelling the Goths from Apulia and Calabria before attempting to raise the siege of Rome, which Totila had now begun to beleaguer, and which Belisarius was determined to relieve.

As in the case of Narses, it proved necessary to divide forces. Johannes disembarked his troops at Otranto, and, as there were only a few scattered bands of the Goths in those regions, he ere long was able to report to Justinian that he was master of South Italy, whereas Belisarius made sail for the mouth of the Tiber. Here he occupied the Harbour (Portus Romanus), while Ostia itself was in the hands of Totila's Goths, who had cast a chain cable across the river to prevent provisions reaching Rome. A gallant attempt made by the Byzantines to burst the chain and fight a way with barges and fireships up the stream into the city failed at the last moment by reason of Bessa's stupidity or treachery, and so incensed were the people and soldiery of the besieged city against their commander, who seems to have accumulated a large amount of money by selling food at exorbitant prices to the famished citizens, that, some Isaurian sentinels having been won over, the Porta Asinaria was opened in the dead of night to the Goths. When they entered (December 17, 546) the Byzantine garrison and a great multitude poured out of the city by other gates—Bessa being obliged to abandon all his ill-gotten gold.

It is scarcely credible, but is asserted by Procopius, that when the Goths entered Rome they found there scarcely five hundred persons. Most of them had taken refuge in the churches,

and after some bloodshed, committed in the first flush of victory, the barbarians were restrained, if not from pillage, from further slaughter of the suppliants by the orders of Totila, who seems to have acted, as on other occasions, with dignity and humanity.[1]

Totila remained longer in Rome than Alaric—whose stay had been only six days. While there he sent as envoy to Justinian the deacon Pelagius (afterwards Pope Pelagius), who with calm courage and almost alone had faced the Gothic king as Pope Leo had formerly faced Attila and Gaiseric. By the hands of Pelagius Totila sent a letter to the Emperor. 'I respect thee as my father,' he wrote, 'and shall always be thy faithful ally; but if thou wilt not accept peace I will destroy Rome, lest it prove anew a danger to the Goths.'

Justinian made no reply; so Totila began to pull down the walls of Rome. He had demolished a third part of them, and possibly a good many other buildings, when suddenly he desisted—possibly because Belisarius, who had rebuilt these same walls, wrote a touching letter to him on the subject, possibly because he hoped some day to make Rome the capital of a 'Gothica' under the auspices of the Eastern Empire. Then he marched off to the south of Italy, taking with him as hostages those of the Roman Senate who—as the famous senators of olden days when Gauls captured Rome—had awaited, though perhaps in not quite so dignified an attitude, the advent of the barbarian victor.

After what we have already heard we ought perhaps not to be much surprised at the statement that when Totila and his Goths vacated Rome the great city, which in the days of Alaric's invasion had still contained about two million

[1] Later medieval writers accuse Totila of wholesale incendiarism and savage destruction of ancient monuments. Gregorovius and other German writers naturally extol his heroism and nobility. His government is praised even by the imperialistic Procopius himself. 'He did not molest the country-folk in any part of Italy, but encouraged them to work the land, merely paying him the dues that they formerly paid to the large landowners.' He appropriated only the wealth of these big landowners, and as the Church (says Villari) had become one of the chief *latifondisti*, it suffered accordingly.

inhabitants, remained for six weeks *absolutely empty*—in all its enormous labyrinth of ancient and later edifices, in all its countless streets and open spaces, not one single human being was visible.[1]

Into the deserted city Belisarius and his Byzantines entered, and the Aurelian walls were hurriedly restored, many old marbles, still visible in many places, being built into them —as had happened in Athens when Themistocles was in power. Then from the surrounding country came flocking back thousands who had sought concealment; hearing which Totila returned; but he was repulsed and once more encamped at Tivoli. And now (547) both Rome and Ravenna were in the hands of the imperialists, and they might have hoped that fortune was again inclining in their favour; but all appeals to the Eastern court [2] were fruitless, for Justinian had of late become totally engrossed by doctrinal questions, and apparently it was his one ambition to be recognized not only as a great civil legislator but as the supreme legislator for the Church—if not her supreme Head—and as the restorer of religious unity by the triumph of what he believed to be the one true faith.

Despairing of aid both from Constantinople and from the imperial troops under Johannes, who obstinately employed all his energies in a kind of guerrilla in the south, Belisarius abandoned Rome and sailed to the coasts of South Italy, where he spent a whole year in fruitless and inglorious expeditions, until at last he received orders to return to Constantinople. Here he arrived in 549, bearing with him immense riches but a tarnished reputation and a spirit broken by his last ill-fated campaign. He was at this time only forty-four years of age. He survived his recall sixteen years, but as

[1] *Post quam devastationem XL aut amplius dies Roma fuit ita desolata ut nemo ibi hominum nisi bestiae morarentur.* (Marcell. Conte, or his continuer.) Ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἄνθρωπον οὐδένα ἐάσας . . . (Procopius.)

[2] Antonina, who seems to have come to her senses and to have shared her husband's dangers in Italy, returned to Constantinople to beg for reinforcements, but found that the Empress Theodora had just died (July 548) and that Justinian was deaf to everything but religious questions, so she merely begged for the recall of Belisarius.

Italy saw him no more his later life must be here dismissed with a few words.

For ten years he lived in retirement at Constantinople, in affluence and respected but without official recognition. In 559, however, the Huns—or rather the Avars,[1] who had seized the country that once belonged to the Huns and, like the Huns, had sent insolent envoys to exact a large tribute—threatened the capture of Constantinople so seriously that Justinian thought of abandoning his capital.[2] In his panic he appealed to Belisarius, whose martial self-confidence seems to have revived, for he made a splendid dash at the savage invaders and routed them; whereupon he was at once recalled by Justinian, whose senile timidity and suspicious jealousy some three years later (563) caused him to believe charges of treason brought against the old soldier to whom he owed so much. Belisarius was deprived of all his property and put under supervision as a suspect. A few months later, his innocence being apparent, restitution was made and he was reappointed to some official dignity. Early in 565 he died, nine months before the death of Justinian. The legend which pictures him as a blind old beggar seated at the portal of a church, with a plate or board bearing the words, *Date obolum Belisario* ('Give a penny to Belisarius!'), seems to have originated in the eleventh or twelfth century.

We must now return to the year 549 and to Italy, where Totila (or Baduila) and his Goths are again making themselves masters of the whole country. Once more they seize the Port of the Tiber and besiege Rome; once more the famished Roman citizens are so incensed at their Byzantine commanders, whom they accuse of hoarding food to sell it at exorbitant rates, that they kill one of them and then persuade the Isaurian sentinels to open a city gate to the enemy. Taranto in the south, Rimini in the north, and many other towns then surrendered to the Goths, who even crossed into Sicily and overran the whole island. The invaders also collected a

[1] See p. 103 *n*.

[2] As on the outbreak of the Nika tumult. See Index.

considerable fleet and ventured to blockade Ancona, but Johannes, who since the recall of Belisarius had continued his somewhat futile guerrilla, combined naval forces with those of the Byzantine commander at Ravenna and inflicted such a crushing defeat on the ill-trained barbarian squadron that Totila once more offered peace to Justinian, proposing somewhat arrogantly to restore to the Empire Sicily and Dalmatia. But Justinian had already (551) appointed Narses to the supreme command against the Goths.

Narses was already seventy-three years old, but seems to have lost none of his former vigour and self-confidence. His great wealth and his persuasive powers enabled him to collect a large and motley host, in which were Avars, Gepidae, Herulians, Persians, and other barbarians, as well as a body of 2500 savages whom a little later he had to bribe to return to their northern homes, so ferocious and unmanageable they proved. These were Longobardi, or Lombards, of whom we shall soon hear a great deal. They were commanded by their chieftain Audoin, father of the famous Alboin. Supported by a fleet, and crossing the mouths of rivers by bridges of boats, Narses led his army by land to Ravenna. He then marched south, and avoiding the tunnelled Furlo pass (p. 141 *n.*), which was strongly held by the enemy, he kept near the sea-line, and having crossed the Apennines near Sentinum and the 'sepulchres of the Gauls' (the Gauls who had fallen in the great battle against the Romans eight and a half centuries before) he awaited Totila's approach from Rome on the plain of Tadino or Tagina, and on the day revealed to him by the Virgin (under whose special protection he believed himself to be) he gave battle.[1] The Goths were routed and Totila, pierced by the lance of a Gepid warrior, was carried by his men to a cottage at Capre, some miles from the field of battle, and died there. This victory was followed up by the surrender of many towns and the capture of Rome, defended only by

[1] This is told us by Paul the Deacon (740–801), whose *History of the Lombards* is our chief authority for the next two centuries. The fine *Gothic War* of Procopius terminates with the death of Theia in 553; but there is a continuation of it by Agathias. See p. 182.

a small Gothic garrison, which for some time held heroically the Mole of Hadrian. Then once more are sent to Constantinople the keys of the ancient mother-city of the Roman Empire, which during Justinian's reign, as Procopius reminds us, had been taken and retaken five times.

Infuriated by the defeat and death of their king and the capture of Rome, the Goths in the south perpetrated at this time some horrible atrocities, massacring five hundred youths whom Totila had retained as hostages, and many of the senators whom he had taken with him as prisoners of war. From this time onward the Roman Senate existed no more. 'After a period of thirteen centuries,' says Gibbon, 'the institution of Romulus expired. . . . Ascend six hundred years and contemplate the kings of the earth soliciting an audience as the slaves, or freedmen, of the Roman Senate.'

Meanwhile in the north a new Gothic army was being collected. Theia, a valorous captain of Totila's, had made Verona his headquarters, and still held Pavia and other important posts; and at Pavia he was proclaimed king. Before attempting to move southwards it was necessary to secure the neutrality of the Franks, who by this time had secured a firm footing in the lake districts and even in parts of Venetia.[1] When this was accomplished Theia crossed the Apennines. His object was to form a junction with his brother Aligern, who had strongly fortified himself in Cumae—that city near Lake Avernus, the home of the Sibyl, which was founded by ancient Greeks perhaps more than a thousand years before the Christian era, and relics of whose mighty ramparts still exist. By skilfully evading the imperial forces the Gothic king reached the Bay of Naples, where, at the mouth of the river Draco (Sarno), not far from Pompeii, he encamped, depending on a Gothic or mercenary fleet for his provisions. For two months the armies of Theia and Narses, separated by the deep stream, faced each other

[1] The compact seems to have involved the cession to the Franks of Pavia, together with the treasure which had been collected there by Vitiges and Totila after the town had recovered from its terrible sack by these same Franks in 538. See p. 142.

without venturing across to attack. Then the Gothic commander of the fleet, alarmed by the approach of hostile ships from Sicily and other parts, surrendered his vessels to the Byzantines, and Theia was obliged to withdraw to the slopes of Mount Vesuvius. Hard pressed by famine, he decided to descend and risk all in an encounter. Leaving their horses behind them, the Goths advanced in a compact phalanx, Theia at their head. 'Which when the Romans saw,' says Procopius,[1] 'deeming that if he were driven back it would be easy to break their whole line of battle, those who felt bold enough—and they were many—united to attack him, some hurling their missiles, others assailing him at close quarters. But he, covering himself with his shield, received thereupon the javelins, and then, suddenly darting forward, slew many of the enemy. And when he saw his shield laden with javelins, giving it to a shield-bearer he took from him another; and so he continued to fight for the third part of the day, until at last, his shield on one occasion being laden with twelve javelins, so that he could not easily lift it or repel his assailants, he held it planted firmly on the ground in front of him, and while dealing mortal blows with his right and parrying with his left he called aloud to a shield-bearer. And when the man brought him another shield, he quickly made exchange; but for a moment his side was exposed and he was struck by a javelin and killed on the spot. And some Romans impaled his head on a pike and bore it around, showing it to both armies.'

4. The Byzantine Supremacy

After the fall of their king the Goths fought desperately for two days more, but they finally surrendered on the condition of either remaining in Italy as subjects of the Emperor or departing to lands beyond the limits of the Empire. Many recrossed the Alps and became merged in other Germanic tribes. A thousand, breaking away before the compact was signed, cut their way to Pavia, where they probably joined the Franks. A few scattered garrisons held out for a time.

[1] This Winkelried episode is on the last page of the *Gothic War*.

Theia's brother Aligern defended Cumae valiantly for more than a year, until the Romans, having 'scooped the Sibyl's cavern into a prodigious mine' (says Gibbon, citing Agathias), caused the collapse of the city's wall, and forced the besieged to surrender.[1]

But still more obstinate was the defence of Lucca. Indeed, it was still uncaptured when a new barbarian deluge swept over the whole face of Italy. Vast hordes of Franks and Alemanni, with some 75,000 fighting men, came pouring from the north, and spread themselves over all the peninsula, led by two Alemann brothers, Butelin (Buccelin) and Leutar (Lothair), apparently commissioned by the unwarlike, though powerful, Frank king, Theudebald, who preferred the security of his palace at Metz. After plundering Lucania, Campania, and Bruttium, Leutar rapidly withdrew northwards. His army was decimated by plague, of which he himself died. Butelin was attacked by Narses on the river Volturnus, in Calabria. He was slain and his army was defeated and dispersed; and before the end of 554 almost all trace of this strange inundation—which in its phenomenal inrush and outrush reminds one of the Cimmerian deluge in the days of King Gyges of Lydia—had disappeared, and although now and again we hear of the great Frank nation, massed like a huge thundercloud in the north and threatening to roll down on Italy, we may for the present forget its existence.

After the rout on the Volturnus and the disappearance of the barbarian invaders Narses entered Rome with his captives and booty. At Conza, in Campania, a fortified camp had hitherto been held by about 7000 Goths. These now surrender, and are sent as captives to Constantinople—probably to be enrolled in the imperial army—and with this event we may consider Byzantine supremacy to have been fully established in Italy. The fourteen years which intervene from the final overthrow of the Gothic domination to the coming of the Lombards in 568 offer little to the chronicler of wars and

[1] Others assert that Aligern, rather than submit to the Franks and Alemanni, escaped to Ravenna and took service in the imperial army.

other dramatic atrocities, and we know comparatively little of the real history of the Italian people during this period, except that by war and plague and famine they had been reduced to a state of great misery and destitution and that Byzantine rule, by its oppressive taxation, necessary for a large standing army and viceregal magnificence, and its introduction of Eastern luxury and extravagance, made things perhaps even worse than they had been under the Goths. And this is saying much, for in spite of much that was admirable in the government of Theoderic and Totila there was little hope for the country while no true union of the dominant and the subject races was realized, and sincere as Theoderic's attempt undoubtedly was, such union was impossible, not only on account of the essential differences between the Roman and the Northern character and temperament (much greater than that between the natures of the Norman and of the Anglo-Saxon), but also because the Goths never became, so to speak, children of the Italian soil, but remained to the end a military caste—an army of fortune, as Villari well calls them.

In later chapters will be given some descriptions of the state of Italy during this epoch, and some remarks on Byzantine art-influences and on the legislation of Justinian, as far as it affected Italy. Here it will suffice to add a few words about Narses.

For about fourteen years after the death of Theia at the battle of Mount Vesuvius Narses was practically the military Dictator or Vice-Imperator of Italy. During the first half of this period he made Ravenna his chief residence; but he did not possess the title of Exarch, which was given to later governors of that city. His official titles were 'Patricius' and 'Magister militum.' His rule seems to have been exceedingly stern, and in spite of Justinian's famous *Pragmatic Sanction* (554), by which civil and ecclesiastical authority in Italy was nominally freed from military interference, the country was practically in a state of siege, the army tributes became insupportable, military officialism overrode municipal jurisdiction, great landowners of military rank oppressed the

working classes, and prelates were imprisoned or sent for punishment to Constantinople on charges of insubordination against the civil government.[1] Under such conditions it was no wonder that agriculture was abandoned, that public buildings fell to ruin, and that famine and pestilence stalked through the land.

In 560 Narses removed to Rome and took up his quarters in the palace of the Caesars on the Palatine. About this time, it will be remembered, the Avars were alarming Justinian at Constantinople, and before he and Belisarius died in 565 there were other evidences of serious movements among the Northern nations. The Slavs as well as various Mongol and Tartar races were pushing westwards from Asia and disturbing those—such as the Lombards, of whom we have already heard —who had lately settled in Central and Northern Europe. On the death of Justinian his nephew, Justin II, proclaimed a policy of peace and military retrenchment; but his retrenchment of the subsidies promised to the Avars by his uncle caused him to realize the danger of such economies, and his perplexity was increased by the arrival of an embassy of Roman nobles, who informed him that rather than submit any longer to the despotic rule of Narses the Italians would ere long call upon the Goths or some other barbarians to save them. Justin's perplexity was perhaps not relieved by the remark of his imperial consort, Sophia—a remark which, if ever made, doubtless came to the ears of the Roman envoys and was repeated by them to Narses—that if she had her way she would soon teach the old eunuch that his proper occupation was spinning wool among the maids. 'I will spin her a tangle that she will never unravel all her life,' is said to have been the answer of Narses when, together with the contemptuous words of the Empress, the envoys brought to him from Justin

[1] Written shortly before the German occupation of Belgium. There was at this time great friction between Justinian and the Roman prelates, the Emperor endeavouring to assert his supremacy as Head of the Church. He had even summoned Pope Vigilius to Constantinople, and, finding him recalcitrant, had treated him with violence and had imprisoned him for half a year on an island. The Pope died at Syracuse on his voyage to Italy in 555.

the order for his recall; and his indignation seems to have been increased by the nomination of an officer, Longinus, who was to supersede him as governor of Ravenna. He refused to accept the order of the Emperor, and in 567 he withdrew to Naples, preferring to risk the perils of disobedience rather than to undergo the humiliations in store for him at Constantinople.

The 'tangle' that Narses threatened to spin was perhaps the Lombard invasion of Italy—which took place in the following year. Anyhow, the historian of the Lombards, Paul the Deacon, who tells us the story, adds that the veteran victor of the Goths was generally suspected of having been so overpowered by anger and indignation that he sent messengers [1] inviting the Lombards to invade Italy, as Boniface had in earlier days invited the Vandals to attack Africa, and as Eudoxia perhaps invited Gaiseric to attack Rome. Like Boniface, it is said, Narses repented too late of his act. Yielding to the entreaties of Pope John III, who visited him at Naples, he is said to have returned to Rome, intending to organize resistance against the Lombard hordes, which were already preparing to pour southward over the Alps. But ere the storm burst he died, in the year 567 or 568—unless indeed we prefer to believe some old authorities [2] who assert that he lived in Rome for five or six years after the Lombard invasion and died in the same year as Pope John, namely, 573.

[1] He is said to have sent them specimens of South Italian fruit to tempt them, as Norman adventurers sent Spanish oranges and other fruit to their fellows in Normandy.

[2] *I.e.* the Roman *Liber Pontificalis*, a work evidently compiled by numerous writers. It is an important source of information concerning Church history, especially of the ninth century. Another work of the same name was compiled (*c.* 840) by Agnellus, a priest of Ravenna, who gives much valuable information, although he ingenuously admits that when he could discover no facts he was wont to depend on prayer to inspire his imagination aright in reconstructing the lives of long-departed pontiffs and prelates.

KINGS, EMPERORS, AND POPES

476–568

The dates signify accession

ITALY	EASTERN EMPERORS	POPES
		Simplicius 468
Odovacar 476	**Zeno** 474	
	[Basiliscus usurper 475	
	Zeno restored 477]	Felix II 483
	Anastasius I 491	Gelasius I 492
Theoderic 493		Anastasius II 496
		Symmachus 498
		(Laurentius, Antipope)
		Hormisdas 514
	Justin I 518	
		John I (imprisoned by Theoderic) 523
Athalaric and Amalasuntha 526	**Justinian** 527	Felix III (elected by Theoderic) 526
Theodahad 534 (deposed)		Boniface II 530
		Dioscorus " (Antipope)
Vitiges (Witigis) 536 (captured 540)		John II 532
		Agapetus I 535
Hildebald 540		Silverius 536 (dep. by Belisarius)
Heraric 541		Vigilius 537 (imprisoned at Constantinople)
Totila (Baduila) 541		
Theia 553 (killed in same year)		Pelagius I 555
Byzantine supremacy 553 to 568	Justin II 565	John III 560

S. W. EUROPE
AT TIME OF
THEODERIC (c.520)
English Miles
0 100 200 300
Britons
Angles & Saxons
Camaracum
Col. Agrippina
Thuringia
Britones
Parisii
Remi
Tullum
Alamanni
Turones
Bituricæ
Vindonissa
Danubius (Ister)
KINGDOM OF FRANKS
KINGDOM OF BURGUNDY
Aquitania
Arverni
Genava
Mediolanum
Tridentum
Aquileia
Patavium
Verona
Ticinum
Placentia
Ligu
Burdigala
Elusa
Vasconia
Vivarium
Tolosa
Orelate
Narbona
Massilia
Genua
Luca
Pisa
Faesulae
Ariminum
Florentia
Ancona
Ravenna
Dalmatia
Sirmium
KINGDOM OF
OSTROGOTHS
Spoletium
Roma
Subiaco
Monte Cassino
Beneventum
Capua
Neapolis
Barium
Brundusium
Corsica
Sardinia
Asturica
Palentia
Caesaraugusta
Salamantica
Toletum
Lusitania
KINGDOM OF SUEVI
KINGDOM OF VISIGOTHS
Tarraco
Valeria
Valentia
Balearic Is.
Corduba
Gades
Carthago nova
Caesarea
Carthago
Bruttio
Cosentia (Cosenza)
Panormus
Rhegium
Sicilia
Syracusae
VANDALS
50
40
10
20

CHAPTER I

THEODERIC[1]

THE chief political and military events of Theoderic's life have already been related. In this chapter I shall give some information about his lineage and personality, his character, his legislation and government, his churches, palaces, and other public works, and the legends about his death. One most important item—the fate of Boëthius—will be reserved for the next chapter.

Theoderic belonged to the royal Gothic family of Amala,[2] which (according to Jordanes) claimed descent from Capt, one of the demigod ancestors of the race called 'Anses'—evidently the 'Asen' of Scandinavian mythology, the superhuman race that inhabited Asgard, the Garden of the Asen, in the Golden Age. He was, it is said, a direct descendant, in the tenth generation, of Hermanric, the founder of the great Gothic Empire (pp. 30, 35). When a lad of eight (462)

[1] The forms 'Theodŏric' and 'Theodatus' (for Theodahad) are assimilations to the Greek and Roman 'Theodōrus' and 'Deodātus.' Procopius writes Θευδέριχος, and doubtless Theuderic is nearest the Gothic. Compare Theudemir, Theudebald, Theudelinda, etc. *Theude* must be, I think, the Gothic *thiuda* (folk, people), which in O.G. is *diut*. Hence *thiudsk* (*tedesco*), *diut-sch* or *deutsch*, means the people's language, as distinguished from Latin and Romance. Diut-rich (Dietrich), or Theode-ric, would thus mean 'Prince of the people.' For *-ric* see p. 30*n*. See also Theoderic's gold coin, Plate I, 18, and explanation, p. 118.

[2] *Amala* is said to mean 'Might.' In the *Nibelungenlied* (which is founded on very old sagas, though the poem as we have it took form only about 1200) Dietrich von Bern, son of Dietmar (*i.e.* Theoderic of Verona, son of Theodemir), is called *der Amelunge*, and his men are *die Amelungen*. Verona, not Ravenna, is regarded in German sagas as Dietrich's capital. He had, as we shall see, a palace there. Medieval legend gives him the Arena as his residence! As I know of no other edition of the *Nibelungenlied* with English annotations (though others probably exist), perhaps I may refer to my modernized Extracts given in two booklets (price 6d.) published by Messrs. Blackie and Son.

he was sent by his father Theodemir as a hostage to Constantinople, where he lived for ten years—a fact which accounts fully for his sympathies with Roman and Byzantine civilization. Theodemir died in 474, and his only surviving legitimate heir had gone off to Italy and Gaul as a soldier of fortune; Theoderic therefore, though not the son of a legal wife, succeeded his father as chieftain of the East Goths.

It has already been remarked that the personality of the famous Ostrogoth king has been confused in old German sagas with that of Theoderic the Visigoth, who fell at the great battle on the Catalaunian plains when fighting on the side of Aëtius and the Romans against Attila—an event that took place (451) three years before Theoderic the Great was born. In these old German myths Theoderic is called Dietrich of Bern (Verona), and his chief captain is Hildebrand. In the *Hildebrandslied*, which is one of the very oldest of these German sagas, Theoderic (exiled, according to some accounts, by his ancestor Hermanric, who really died a century earlier) attacked Odovacar in Italy, but was conquered and, together with Hildebrand, took refuge at the court of Attila, with whose aid he finally conquered Odovacar in a fierce battle, the Rabenschlacht, or the Strit vor Rabene (*i.e.* the Raven-battle, or the Fight before Ravenna). Here of course we have much dislocation of chronology and confusion of persons. And in the ancient German epic, the *Nibelungenlied*—a grand old poem, which in pathos and the power of simple and direct expression is not unworthy to be compared with Homer—still greater confusion prevails, for Dietrich is here brought on to the stage not only with Etzel (Attila) but with Siegfried, the dragon-slayer of Scandinavian Edda-mythology, a superhuman hero of dim prehistoric times.[1] With the Siegfried myth and with Dietrich sagas the poet of the *Nibelungenlied* has interwoven the terrible massacre of the Burgundians by the Romans under Aëtius and the Huns under Attila, which took place in 437

[1] In other sagas Dietrich is evidently confused with Siegfried himself. He possesses magical powers and slays dragons.

(see p. 90). Gunther, the king of the Nibelungen—as the Burgundians were called, according to the myth, after they had got possession of the famous Nibelungen hoard—is evidently the Burgundian king Gundocar, who perished in this massacre; but the scene of the tragedy is transported from Burgundy in Gaul to Etzelnburg, the camp and palace of Attila on the Danube.

There is also an old German saga on the subject of Dietrich's death which intimates his mysterious disappearance. This offers an interesting contrast to certain Italian myths on the same subject which I shall ere long relate.

In spite of the ten years spent by Theoderic at Constantinople during the most receptive period of his life, in spite too of his seventeen extant letters (doubtless much emended and polished up by his minister, Cassiodorus), and in spite of many other evidences of his admiration for classic art and literature, some have believed that Theoderic was so illiterate as to have been unable to sign his name. The first four letters of his name, says Gibbon, were inscribed (cut out?) in a plate of gold, and the king drew his pen over the paper through the apertures. But it is possible that this device was only used by him for signing documents with his rather complicated monogram, which is found on some of his coins.[1] A metal plate the apertures of which are smeared over with ink or paint is surely a common device for rapidly marking words or signs on wood, linen, or paper.

As we have already seen, the one great ambition of Theoderic was to weld the Goths and Italians into one nation. His efforts were specially directed towards encouraging the civilizing influences of classical art and literature and bringing his fellow-Goths under such influences and under the restraint of constitutional law. In Rome the schools of

[1] Such monograms occur on coins of Theodosius, Justinian, and other Emperors, as well as on some of Odovacar (Plate I, coin 17), Athalaric, Baduila, Liutprand, etc., and on coins of cities, as Ravenna and Lucca. Theoderic's monogram ('Theodorus') is generally of this form:

art, rhetoric, medicine, and law were generously supported by him, as also by his daughter Amalasuntha, who even outdid him in erudition and in her 'Romanizing' predilections. Literary studies became fashionable—partly through the patronage of Romanizing Goths, partly also doubtless as a protest against the illiterate barbarian or against his insolent patronage. Virgil was publicly recited in the forum, classical verse and prose were imitated, and much would-be classical Latin was used in religious and political functions. The letters, rescripts, and other writings of Theoderic's chief Secretary of State, Cassiodorus, and of the senator and philosopher Boëthius, are for their elegant Latinity comparable with the writings of Pliny and Seneca, if not with those of Cicero. The public monuments in Rome and other cities were protected by the institution of a special police and night-watch, by which the Gothic king endeavoured to check the vandalism of the 'Roman'—a title of as bitter contempt as the 'barbarian' or the 'Graeculus esuriens' of earlier days; for the natives of Rome and other Italian cities were much addicted to chopping off the heads and arms of bronze statues[1] or wrenching away bronzen plates and fastenings for the sake of the metal. We hear of Theoderic offering a large sum of gold pieces for the recovery of a bronze statue that had been stolen in Como.

And it was not only by preserving the memorials of past civilization that he tried to forward the best interests of both the peoples subject to his rule. He also favoured agriculture, instituted a postal system, regulated fisheries, founded iron factories in Dalmatia, opened a gold-mine in the Abruzzi, and drained large tracts of the Pomptine Marshes.

As regards his actual legislation, perhaps Theoderic was not so wise as the Visigoth Athaulf, who, it will be remembered, declared his conviction that no permanent state was possible for the Goths except one founded on the laws and subject to

[1] In spite of all the ravages of Goths and Vandals there was still in Rome, says Cassiodorus, a multitudinous 'people' of statues and 'droves' of (bronzen) horses.

the constitution of the Empire. It is true that Theoderic nominally assented to the principle that 'laws were made in Constantinople and only edicts in Italy,' and he seems to have fully acquiesced in the fact that, even though he had received the imperial insignia from Anastasius, he was neither an Emperor nor even recognized at the Eastern court as an hereditary king,[1] but only as a 'tyrant'; nevertheless he issued edicts which had all the essentials of Gothic laws for his kingdom, and although he retained the names of the ancient Roman magistracies and paid great respect (at first) to the Roman Senate, and entrusted his distant provinces in Gaul and Sicily to Roman prefects, his power rested solely on his army of Gothic warriors,[2] and he really governed through his Gothic military counts (*comites*) and his privy council of Gothic nobles; for the Senate was now nothing but a dignified and politically powerless assembly of Roman patricians—such a figure-head as the Athenian Areopagus became in the age of Philip of Macedon.

The coins of Theoderic afford an index of his attitude towards the Empire. Gibbon asserts that his image—instead of that of the Emperor—is engraved on his coins, and alleges this as evidence that he 'assumed under a kingly title the whole substance and plenitude of imperial prerogative.' On the other hand, Villari states that 'only the Emperor could coin money with his own portrait,' and leads one to infer that Theoderic never assumed the prerogative of placing his own image on a coin. The truth seems to be that he did sometimes stamp his own effigy even on *gold* coins, thus assuming an exclusively imperial prerogative, for *one* such coin has been discovered; but in Gibbon's day this fact was unknown, seeing that this coin (for which see p. 118) was only found in 1894.

[1] Procopius, however, zealous anti-Goth though he was, says: 'Theoderic loved justice. He was nominally a tyrant, but really a king.' Moreover an inscription found in the Pomptine Marshes, a part of which Theoderic drained, gives him the title 'semper Augustus,' and in one of his later rescripts he gives himself the imperial title 'Romanus princeps.'

[2] In the army there were also Romans, but they seemed to glory in the privilege of being called Goths!

His most important edict (*Edictum Theoderici*) consisted of 154 articles. These were founded on Roman law modified by Christian sentiment. Nominally the Italians were allowed to retain their legal rights, and were safeguarded against illegalities on the part of the Goths, while the Goths were under the military *régime* of the counts; but this dual legislation could not but result in great friction between the military and the civil authorities and in the subordination of the latter; for the dominant military caste of arrogant barbarians naturally overrode all equity, and Italians were not allowed to bear arms, except as mercenaries in the Gothic ranks; they were regarded as useful shopkeepers and mechanics and artists and physicians, and were much employed for collecting tribute from their fellow-countrymen. The land was to a great extent given over to the Gothic soldiery, who ousted the veterans of Odovacar from their estates.

Thus Theoderic's attempt to fuse into one the two nations produced, as it was bound to produce, intense hostility and embitterment. This caused him more and more to assume an absolute and tyrannical attitude. Finally religious fanaticism added its venom to racial enmity. Then his innate savagery, roused by opposition, proved uncontrollable.

Thus we are led to the last unhappy years of his reign—to the deaths of Boëthius and Symmachus, whose tragic fates will be related elsewhere—and to the death of Theoderic himself, which took place some two years later.

The terror and abhorrence excited in many minds by the gloomy and ferocious personality of the heretical barbarian king in his latter days were doubtless the origin of the numerous uncanny stories told about his death.[1] Procopius relates the following, which is almost as 'creepy' as the banquet-scene in *Macbeth*. It was shortly after Pope John had died in Ravenna prison, not long after the death of Boëthius—strangled in the most cruel fashion imaginable—and of Symmachus, the

[1] His mysterious disappearance—like the passing of King Arthur—to which allusion is made in German sagas, is of course not due to abhorrence, but to the Germanic conception of him as a great hero.

11. MAUSOLEUM OF THEODERIC
Ravenna

father-in-law of Boëthius and the head of the Roman Senate, whom Theoderic had caused to be executed—probably strangled—without any trial. There was a banquet being held in the palace at Ravenna, and a plate was set in front of the king containing a great fish. Its protruding eyes and gaping mouth—like those of a strangled man—inspired Theoderic with such terror that shuddering he rose from his seat and, leaving the discomfited guests, retired to his bed—where violent ague and dysentery soon caused his death. Another story, which Pope Gregory the Great did not feel ashamed to relate with all seriousness in his *Dialogues*, asserted that a collector of taxes who touched at the island of Lipari was told by a hermit that Theoderic was dead. 'Surely not!' exclaimed the tax-gatherer. 'I left him quite well a short time since.' 'Ay, but I saw him just now,' replied the hermit. 'He was being dragged along with fettered hands by demons in the presence of Pope John and Symmachus in order to be cast into the crater of our volcano.' A third story, current at Ravenna in later times, stated that, in order to prevent the fulfilment of a prophecy that threatened him with death by lightning, Theoderic roofed his mausoleum with one enormous concave disk of stone, and always took refuge under it during thunderstorms; but the lightning pierced the mighty mass and killed him, leaving the great stone split to its very centre—as may be seen by everyone to-day!

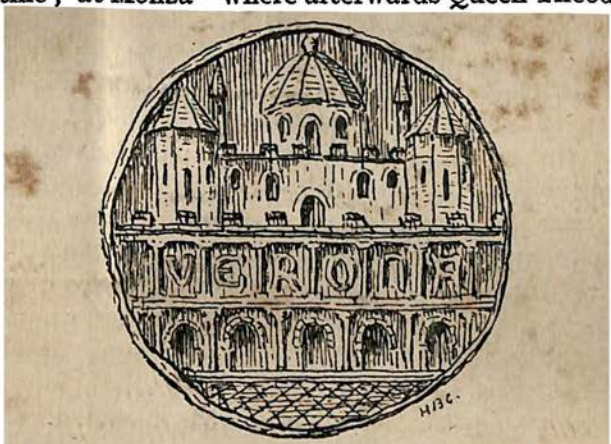
Theoderic's Mausoleum, built by himself (possibly finished by Amalasuntha), consists of a massive ten-sided arched substructure surmounted by a round edifice, once surrounded by a colonnade, and still roofed with the huge monolith above mentioned, which forms a shallow dome, thirty-six feet in diameter, and weighing probably not much less than five hundred tons. How this immense mass was raised to its present position it is difficult to say—if it was not by magic, aided perhaps by huge cranes and ropes passed through the strange protuberances of the mighty stone. The upper part of the building, originally the chapel of the Mausoleum, was reconsecrated—'reconciled'—as a Catholic church (Sta. Maria

della Rotonda) after Ravenna was captured by Belisarius (540), and had come again (549) into the hands of the Byzantines and Catholics.[1] It is believed by some that the urn or sarcophagus of Theoderic stood on four small columns on the top of the roof; by others that an empty urn or stone coffin (a cenotaph) stood there, but that the sarcophagus with the body stood in the substructure. However that may be, it seems almost certain that the bones of the Arian king were either burnt and dispersed, or else secretly stolen away and buried by monks who were anxious to prove the story of the fiends and the Lipari volcano. Anyhow, they seem to have suddenly disappeared; and perhaps the strangest part of the whole business is the fact that in 1854 what was believed to be Theoderic's skeleton (formerly stolen by monks) was discovered by some masons in the old cemetery of Cenceda, near the city wall, and that it *once more disappeared* (evidently this time carried off by fiends!), together with a golden ornament—Villari says a golden cuirass—that, curiously enough, the monks had failed to appropriate. As a set-off to all these stories it should be remarked that Jordanes, who was himself a Goth, is silent about them and does not even intimate that Theoderic felt any pricks of conscience or pangs of remorse. Indeed he pictures him on his death-bed surrounded by his family and his Gothic nobles and laying his hand on the head of the little Athalaric, whom, together with his mother Amalasuntha, he surrenders to their loyalty and affection, recommending them also to love and respect the Roman people and the Roman Senate and 'to cherish the friendship and favour of the Eastern Emperor above all else except the love of God.'

The palaces, churches, and other public buildings erected by Theoderic were evidently very numerous. He built, or rebuilt, aqueducts at Rome (the *Aqua Claudia* and others), at Terracina, Spoleto, Parma, Trient, and Ravenna (the *Trajana*);

[1] Later it was the chapel of the Benedictine monastery in the vicinity, probably often visited by Peter the Sinner (Dante, *Par.* xxi), whose monastery was not far off. It was also for centuries used as the Pantheon, or S. Croce, of Ravenna, and was surrounded by many tombs.

amphitheatres and *thermae* at Pavia and other places; city walls at Verona and at Rome; basilicas at Ravenna, Rome, Capua, Naples, Spoleto (where some beautiful relics of the ancient S. Agostino del Crocifisso are certainly Ostrogothic), and doubtless at his favourite Verona, and at Pavia; palaces at Rome—where he rebuilt parts of the Domus of the Caesars; at Terracina—if the very extensive ruins are really Ostrogothic; at Monza—where afterwards Queen Theodelinda,



CASTLE OF THEODERIC AT VERONA
From an old seal

according to Paul the Deacon, 'restored Theoderic's summer-palace'; at Pavia—where the Ravennate chronicler Agnellus afterwards saw the Gothic king on his war-steed depicted in mosaic on the vault of the Tribunal of his great palace; at Verona—where, on the site now occupied by the Castello San Pietro, may perhaps be recognized relics of a palace [1] of Theoderic that is delineated on an old Verona seal. Lastly, at Ravenna there still exists an edifice known as Theoderic's

[1] The seal bears as legend (not given in the picture) the motto conferred on the city by Frederick Barbarossa after the Peace of Constance. It cannot therefore date before 1183. But the palace is known to have existed long after the time of Theoderic, and to have been used by the Lombard and Carolingian kings and (as a fort) as late as 1400. It was demolished in 1801. The building in the foreground is a portico in connexion with the city walls. The dome and pointed towers are probably Carolingian.

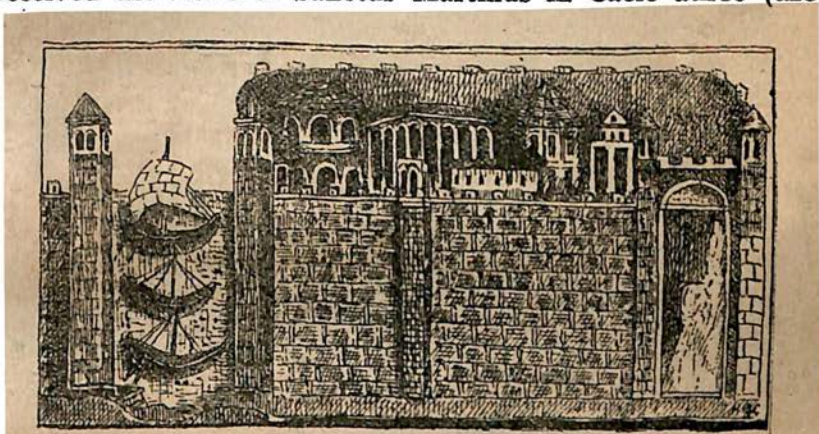
Palace. It is close to his splendid basilica, and one may feel certain that it once formed a part of the royal buildings, but Professor Ricci and other experts consider that it dates from a later age, and that the great palace of Theoderic stood somewhat nearer the city walls, amidst what are now the public gardens below S. Apollinare Nuovo, where foundations and pavements have been excavated. We are told by Agnellus that it commanded a view of the sea—which, however, was then much nearer the city—and that it was surrounded by fine gardens and adorned with splendid mosaics and statues; and he describes a mosaic (or relief ?) of Theoderic on horseback somewhat similar to that which he saw at Pavia. This palace was despoiled by Belisarius (540) and by the Lombards, but many of its splendid marbles and works of art remained intact until Charles the Great transported them to Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) to decorate his palace and the cathedral which he was erecting after the model of S. Vitale.

Besides his Mausoleum and the relics of his palace Ravenna still possesses, in a wonderful state of preservation, a very beautiful and wonderfully decorated building erected by Theoderic—the basilica, now called S. Apollinare Nuovo, which he built in connexion with his palace. When (in 493) he first captured the city, which had been held so long by Odovacar, the existing churches were probably those which I have already mentioned in connexion with Galla Placidia (p. 92). These churches all belonged to the Catholics, and it seems that at first Theoderic contented himself with appropriating, and perhaps rebuilding for his Arians, the church of S. Teodoro [1] and converting the adjacent Roman bath into a baptistery, which is known to-day as the Battistero degli Ariani. Later, as we already know, he answered Justin's order to close all Arian churches by shutting up or converting to Arian service all Catholic churches, and the so-called 'Arian cross' was doubtless to be seen in all the

[1] Given back to the Catholics after 540 and rechristened as Spirito Santo, Theoderic's Arian Baptistery being then changed into a church by additions. At present nothing remains of it but the cupola, in the centre of which is a very fine mosaic of Christ's baptism and the twelve Apostles.

12. S. Apollinare Nuovo
Ravenna

churches of Ravenna.[1] His special basilica—the cathedral probably of his Arian bishops—was the church, already mentioned, which he built in connexion with his palace, bringing many splendid marble columns from Rome for this purpose. It was consecrated to Jesus Christ, and retained that denomination until it was 'purged' and 'reconciled' to Catholic use by Archbishop Agnellus (*c.* 560). It then received the name of Sanctus Martinus in Caelo aureo (the



CLASSE, RAVENNA
Mosaic in S. Apollinare Nuovo

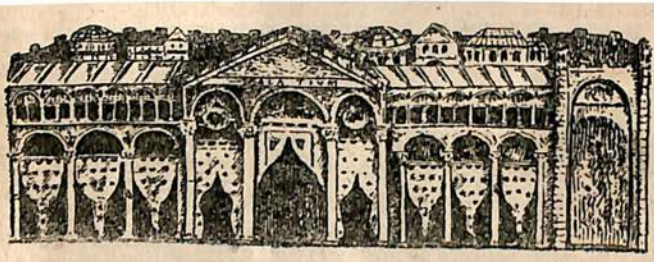
'golden heaven,' as in other cases, referring to a gilded roof). About 800 it was rechristened as S. Apollinare and distinguished from the other magnificent basilica of that name, which had been built on the spot where the saint [2] had suffered martyrdom just outside the walls of Ravenna's harbour-town (then 'Classis'), by being called S. Apollinare Nuovo, or Dentro ('Within').

Besides its beautiful antique (Roman) marble columns crowned with capitals of white marble carved into delicate

[1] It is shaped something like the 'Maltese cross,' and may be seen still at Ravenna, though later it was, of course, almost exterminated.

[2] Apollinaris, the patron saint of Ravenna, was a disciple and friend of St. Peter, and was sent by him to evangelize North Italy. He was beaten to death by a heathen mob.

foliage and basket-work in Byzantine style and surmounted by the Byzantine 'dosseret' or 'pulvino'—a sort of second capital—the basilica possesses very special value and attraction on account of the resplendent and most interesting mosaics with which both sides of the nave are covered. Above the clerestory windows on one side are depicted thirteen miracles of Christ and on the other thirteen scenes from His Passion—the absence of the Crucifixion being characteristic of earlier



THEODERIC'S PALACE AT RAVENNA
Mosaic in S. Apollinare Nuovo

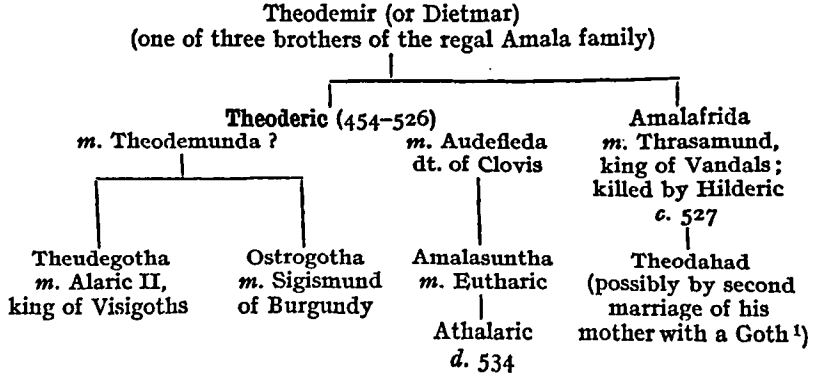
Christian art, which shrank from the representation of the agony of the dying Saviour.

Between the windows are delineated on a large scale figures of prophets and saints, many of them of great dignity. All these clerestory mosaics date from the reign of Theoderic, and show, especially in the varied attitudes, beautifully designed and shaded drapery, and finely graduated colouring of the grand figures of prophets and saints, the characteristics of the *Roman* as contrasted with the *Byzantine* school of art. Still more magnificent are the mosaics which on both sides of the nave fill the space between the summits of the arches and the clerestory windows. On one side is depicted the Saviour enthroned amidst four angels—a majestic group—approached by twenty-five martyrs, at the further end of which procession stands the palace of Theoderic. On the other side is the Virgin with the Child, enthroned likewise between four angels and approached by the three Magi followed by twenty-two virgins, and at the further end is a picture of the walled

town and the harbour of Classe. Now it seems quite certain (for reasons that will be given in a later chapter on Byzantine art) that these processions of virgins and martyrs are of later date than the rest of the mosaics, and that when the church was 'purged' for Catholic use they were inserted in the place of the original mosaics put up by Theoderic, which probably represented the king on horseback and various processions of Gothic nobles and warriors. In the picture of the palace the spaces of the arches are now filled by representations of curtains, evidently intended to hide the figures of Theoderic himself (under the main portal) and of his courtiers or warriors—an intention not entirely fulfilled, for here and there one can trace a dim outline of a human form, and from behind more than one of the curtains is to be seen a hand projecting and clasping the column of the arch.

One more fact in this connexion is of historical interest. In the background of the palace and also of the walls of Classe are depicted numerous buildings, some of them most evidently basilicas and others baptisteries. One cannot of course expect strict accuracy in representation, but it is not likely that these buildings are imaginative. I think we may be pretty sure that we have here rough delineations of the old Ursian cathedral and the adjacent Baptistery (still extant), and probably of the original S. Giovanni Evangelista, built by Galla Placidia, or of S. Teodoro, rebuilt by Theoderic, and of the Battistero degli Ariani—all of which edifices I have described elsewhere. It will be noticed that there is no sign of any campanile as yet existing. There is also of course no sign of the two magnificent Ravenna churches S. Vitale and S. Apollinare in Classe, which were erected, or finished, during the somewhat later period of the Gothic War and the Byzantine supremacy (*c.* 535–50), and will be described in the chapter that treats of Justinian.

LINEAGE OF THEODERIC THE GREAT



THE VANDAL KINGS

Visimar
(killed in war with Constantius I, *c.* 305)

. . . . .

Godegisel
(killed by Franks, *c.* 406)

. . . . .

Gunderic, 409–27
Gaiseric (Genseric), 427–77
Hunneric, 477–84
(*m.* Eudocia, dt. of Valentinian III)
Gunthamund, 484–96
Thrasamund, 496–523
(*m.* Amalafrida, Theoderic's sister)
Hilderic, 523–31
Gelimer, 531–34
(captured by Belisarius)

[1] So stated by Villari. But Thrasamund died in 523, and Theodahad at his accession (534) would thus have been only about ten years old. Thrasamund was therefore probably his father.

CHAPTER II

WRITERS OF THE AGE

FROM time to time I have mentioned some of the principal writers, both Latin and Greek, to whom we are indebted for our knowledge of much that has been hitherto recorded.

It will be remembered that some of these writers were ecclesiastics, or even Fathers of the Church, while others were pagans or were for other reasons strongly biassed, so that it is often impossible to feel quite sure of their facts or of their estimates of character. Those writers who relate contemporary events are naturally the most graphic and the most interesting and might be expected to furnish the most accurate details; but it is just such writers who were most swayed by personal and political influences. On the other hand, those who compiled historical and biographical accounts of days long past were wont to interweave a considerable amount of legendary matter, which they sometimes evolved from their own inner consciousness, as was the case with Agnellus of Ravenna, who, as we have seen, when facts failed him, in order that there should be no *lacuna* in his *Lives of the Pontiffs*, relied on God and the prayers of the brethren to inspire his imagination. For the first third of the fourth century we have Lactantius, and Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, who gives us, besides various works on ecclesiastical history, a Life of Constantine. He ingenuously intimates that he has related or suppressed facts according as they appeared to be favourable or not to the interests of religion. Then we have the Emperor Julian, and his admirer Libanius, the rhetorician and teacher of the

Greek Fathers Basil (329–79) and Chrysostom (347–407), both of whom were copious writers and contemporaries of St. Jerome, the Latin Father to whom we owe the Vulgate, and of St. Gregory Nazianzen, the fierce opponent of the apostate Emperor. Then we have the poet Ausonius (*c.* 350), tutor to Gratian, and Ammianus Marcellinus, another admirer of Julian, who begins his valuable work before the accession of that Emperor and takes us as far as the disappearance of Valens (378). He, although a native of Syrian Antioch, was, as Gibbon says, 'the last subject of Rome who composed a profane history in the Latin language.' Next comes the Greek pagan Zosimus, a vehement assailant of Theodosius the Catholic. His narrative extends for a considerable period after the reign of this Emperor. Parts of the next period are covered by the *Epistles* of St. Ambrose, the *Confessions* and *De Civitate Dei* and other works of St. Augustine (354–431), and the writings of his disciple Orosius. Also Jordanes and Procopius, of whom we shall hear more shortly, now begin to be useful, giving us information about Alaric and Galla Placidia and the Vandals and the period between Gaiseric's sack of Rome and the deposition of Romulus Augustulus in 476. For the episode of Attila we are greatly indebted to the writings (*Excerpta*, etc.) of Priscus, about whom see pp. 96–97. Lastly may be mentioned Sidonius of Lyon, who married the daughter of Avitus and wrote Panegyrics on him and others of the 'puppet-Emperors.' His writings gained him the bishopric of Clermont, but for our purposes they are of small value.

After the fall of the Western Empire in 476 Latin literature, as was natural, for a time disappeared; but under the Romanizing patronage of Theoderic it experienced a brilliant, though short-lived, revival in the famous *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boëthius and the works of Cassiodorus, especially his *History of the Goths*, or rather the brilliant *résumé* of this work by the Ostrogoth Jordanes. Another very notable historian of this period is the Greek writer Procopius, who, as we have already seen, accompanied Belisarius on his Persian, African,

and Italian campaigns and wrote a graphic account of the Gothic War up to the death of Theia.

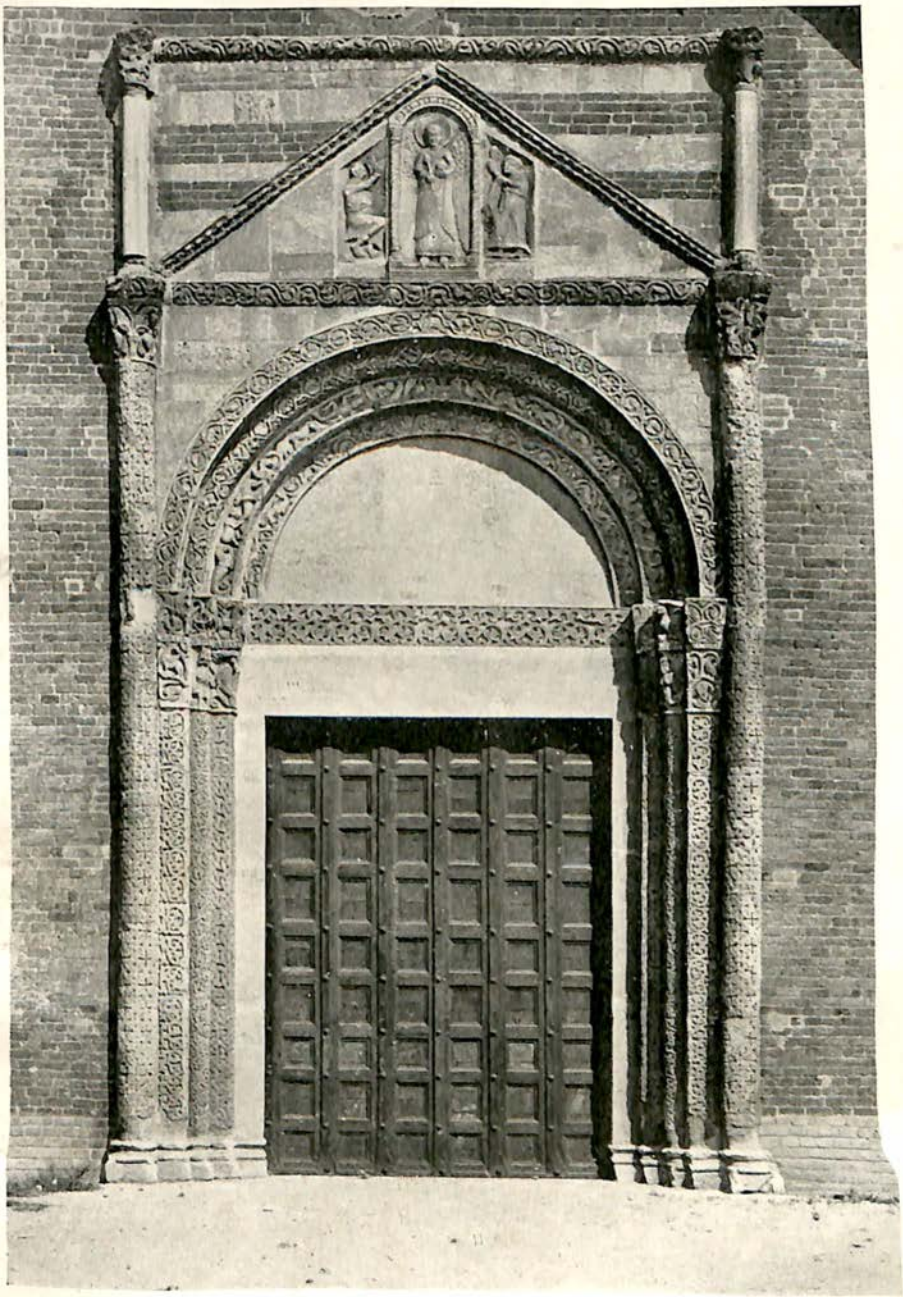
Anicius Manlius Severinus BOËTHIUS, whose names testify to a very distinguished lineage, was born about 470. In early life he studied at Athens, and was a zealous Greek scholar. In 510 he was consul, as had been his father before him, and later *Magister officiorum*. His learning, his wealth, and high office gained him great influence. We hear that his palace was 'decorated with ivory and marble,' and there still exist letters (evidently composed by Cassiodorus) in which Theoderic addresses him with much friendliness, begging his advice and aid about such things as the state of the coinage, and about musical instruments, clocks moved by running water, sun-dials, planetary spheres, and other mechanical devices, which he wishes to send to the Burgundian king and hopes will cause the barbarians much astonishment and teach them 'not to fancy themselves equal to *us*.' In 522 both his sons, whose mother was the daughter of one of the chief senators, Symmachus by name, were made consuls, though they must have been still rather young for the office. Thus the life of Boëthius might seem to have been very happy unless we were compelled to recognize the truth of Solon's 'ancient saying,' as Sophocles calls it, that we should 'look to the end'—compelled also still more to remember the words of Boëthius himself: 'In every adversity the most unhappy kind of misfortune is to have been happy.'

It will be remembered that towards the end of his reign Theoderic was much embittered by the hostility that his well-meant efforts had met with, especially in Rome, where a very strong patriotic and anti-Goth feeling prevailed. Doubtless some of these patriots were in correspondence with Constantinople, and there was no lack of informers ready to excite suspicion against Romans of distinction. A Goth partisan, a certain official named Cyprian, came forward to accuse the senator Albinus. Hereupon Boëthius, with a courage—or a recklessness—inspired by innocence, hastened

from Rome to interview Theoderic in his Verona palace. 'If Albinus is guilty, then I am guilty—and the whole Senate is guilty,' he is said to have exclaimed.[1] But instead of rightly interpreting these courageous words Theoderic turned furiously upon him, accusing him, as Boëthius himself tells us, of having in certain letters expressed hopes that Rome might recover her freedom (*libertatem sperasse Romanam*). He was sent to Pavia and there imprisoned. The charges were referred to the Senate, or perhaps a commission sent by the Senate, which (doubtless overawed) adjudged him guilty. To what punishment he was at first condemned is not known. It is known that he composed a Defence, but it was not heard, and, unlike the *Apology* of Socrates, it has not survived. His place of imprisonment is not known for certain. Some speak of a 'Rocca' (fortress) near Pavia, others of a building near the former church of S. Zeno, others of the baptistery of the then cathedral—possibly S. Zeno, which, like most of Pavia's 165 once existing churches, has disappeared.

During several months of terrible suspense he occupied his mind by composing his *Apologia* and his *De Consolatione Philosophiae*. Finally, Theoderic, perhaps incensed by the discovery of some plot, and furious at the sympathy which the Romans showed for the condemned senator and his family, and perhaps at the openly expressed grief of his wife's father, Symmachus, determined to put Boëthius to death. The sentence was carried out with the most barbarous inhumanity. A cord was tied round his head and tightened until his eyes almost started from their sockets; then his life was beaten out of him with clubs. This took place, it is said, in the Agro Calvenzano, on the road between Milan and Pavia, and he was probably buried there, for about the year 1000 the Emperor Otto III—the same who opened and probably pillaged Charles the Great's tomb at Aachen—

[1] Gibbon (followed by Villari) says that he also exclaimed: 'And if I *had* known anything I would not have told you' (*Si ego scissem tu nescisses*). This, according to Gregorovius, is incorrect. Boëthius himself says he *would* have used these words of Julius Cassus, whose death is related by Seneca, *if* there had been anything to be gained by so doing.



13. S. Pietro in Ciel d'oro
Pavia

caused his body to be carried to the Lombardic church S. Pietro in Ciel d'oro in Pavia,[1] where his tomb, not far from that of S. Augustine, was to be seen for more than eight centuries. It seems to have disappeared when S. Pietro was dismantled and for a time abandoned (1844–75), for it is no longer to be seen in the restored church (see Figs. 13 and 52).

A few months after the death of Boëthius his father-in-law, Symmachus, was accused, loaded with chains, taken to Ravenna, and there put to death, probably with torture, and certainly without any trial.

Thus, in spite of his edicts and his professed admiration for Roman law, the ferocious military despotism of the Gothic king overrode all equity; for all old writers agree in rejecting as false the charges brought against Boëthius. That he appealed to the laws and demanded an open trial both for Albinus and for himself is known, and that Symmachus did so—however hopeless of success—we may feel sure. It seems evident that Athaulf was right when he said that the Goths were incapable of constitutional self-government—an art that their descendants have yet to learn.

The work that Boëthius composed in prison is not only, to use Gibbon's elegant phrase, 'worthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully,' not merely a literary composition of very high merit, but, from the circumstances under which it was written, one of the most real and pathetic books in the world. It stands apart from all works of fictitious pathos, together with a very small number of other writings, among which even the *Apology* of Socrates or the *Phaedo* itself can scarcely claim a place. Its external form is to some extent dramatic. Philosophy, a lady of august presence, such as Athene herself, appears to Boëthius in prison, where he has been writing verses with the help of the Muses and is silently pondering on what he has written. She somewhat sternly dismisses the siren daughters of Memory and questions him. He describes his woes and defends his conduct: he will leave a record of

[1] 'The body from which this sacred soul was chased lieth, down on earth in Cieldauro' (Dante, *Par.* x, 127).

his unjust treatment; he denounces Fortune and, like Job, appeals to the tribunal of God. Philosophy begins to console him, at times (in spite of her dismissal of the Muses) breaking forth into song. She then bids him make profession of his beliefs, and on this subject they hold a long dialogue both in prose and in verse—the verse, which is full of noble thoughts and is sometimes of great beauty, being Horatian in language and also in form, but introducing as many as twenty-six variations of such metres as the Anacreontic, Sapphic, Asclepiadic, etc. Philosophy finds that Boëthius is *ignorant of himself* (an allusion to the Delphic maxim 'Know thyself') and urges him not to trouble himself about the wench Fortune. 'Ah,' he exclaims, 'these are fine words, but misery is *real*.' She then reminds him of his former happiness—of his wife, his sons, his honours, his wealth. To this he answers: 'In every adversity the worst kind of unhappiness is to have been happy'—a sentiment which has been echoed by many a writer, and has been harmonized in immortal verse by Dante.[1] But Philosophy points out that he still possesses the love of his family and much else that should make him happy, and inveighs against ambition and pours disdain on fame. He replies that it was not any ordinary ambition that made him take part in public affairs, but the wish to make use of his powers for the good of his fellow-men. She approves, but again dwells on the sovereign power of Love, singing its praises in a fine lyric as that which binds the universe together in harmony; 'and well, too, were the race of men if the same love that governeth the heaven governed your minds also,' for there is no law so high as that which love makes for itself:

Quis legem dat amantibus?
Major lex amor est sibi.

He then begs her tell the nature of true felicity. This she

[1] *Inf.* v, 121. For the echoes in Chaucer and other writers perhaps I may refer to my edition of annotated selections from Dante's *Inferno* published by the Oxford University Press. In Dante's case it is no mere echo. The words of Francesca are fraught with as deep a pathos as the words of Boëthius himself.

14. Boëthius
From the painting by Giovanni Santi

does by describing *false* happiness and bidding him imagine the converse—the felicity that consists in the contempt of all earthly things and in looking to God as the *summum bonum*. This leads to a long discussion (still in verse and in prose) on the nature of God and of the soul and of animals and of plants. Then Boëthius starts the old difficulty about the existence of *evil*, and when this is solved as well as one can expect, he leads on to the mysteries of human free-will and God's prescience, of predestination and chance, of prayer, of thought and sensation and volition, and other abstruse questions. Philosophy does not undertake to solve all these problems, but insists that 'hope and prayer are *not* vain delusions and when sincere cannot but be effectual.' Thus the *Consolation* of Boëthius ends. The rest is silence; but Philosophy remains by his side till all is over.

It has been hotly asserted by some modern writers, chiefly German, that Boëthius was a pagan and that various doctrinal works against Arians and other heretics with which he is sometimes credited are forgeries. Certainly it seems strange that his chief work makes no allusion to Christianity. And yet in earlier times he was always regarded as a Christian and as a Christian martyr, and not only was his body buried in 'Cieldauro' beside that of the great Christian Father, but his 'sainted spirit' has been imagined in Paradise [1] by the great Italian poet whose poem holds up a mirror to the beliefs of the Middle Ages and, as Carlyle says, 'renders them for ever rhythmically visible.'

There is a version of the *De Consolatione* by King Alfred—who, by the way, also translated writings of the elder Augustine, of Orosius, of Gregory the Great, and of Bede, as well as composing a version of the Psalms. His translation (*c.* 897) is very fine, and here and there he introduces a good deal of his own; indeed, Book V is almost rewritten by him, and gains

[1] *Par.* x, 125, where St. Thomas Aquinas points out to Dante the star-like spirit of Boëthius and describes him as one who 'proves the world fallacious to him who listens well.' In the *Convito* Dante calls Cicero and Boëthius his 'guides to the gentle lady Philosophy.' In *Inf.* v Francesca, speaking to Dante, calls Boëthius (or possibly Virgil) *il tuo dottore*.

thus an additional interest as the spontaneous expression of a great king's contempt for worldly greatness. Even a verse translation of the *Metra*, the verses of Boëthius, is attributed to Alfred. Chaucer also translated the *Consolation*. His English is rough and unmusical in comparison with the original, and of the *Metra* he gives nothing but a rather bald prose version. In his own poems he now and then translates or imitates passages from the work of Boëthius, but never with much success. How strongly the book appealed to former generations is evident from the fact that almost every great writer during the Middle Ages mentions, quotes, or imitates Boëthius.

The name of CASSIODORUS[1] has been already frequently mentioned. He was born about 480. Introduced by his father, who was a high official, he entered as a young man the service of Theoderic. For many years he was Secretary and Minister of State to the Gothic king, and afterwards to Athalaric, Amalasuntha, Theodahad, and even Vitiges. But he was now about sixty years of age, and his long experience had convinced him that the idea, which he had shared with Theoderic, of welding together into one the Gothic and the Italian nations was unrealizable. He therefore withdrew from public life, and near his native town Squillace, in Calabria, he founded (*c.* 539) a hermitage and a monastery—the latter somewhat on the model of the world-famed monastery of Monte Cassino, over which St. Benedict had already been ruling for some ten years. Here he passed the rest of his long life, devoting his time to contemplation and intellectual work. It is probable that he lived until the Lombard invasion of 568, and by some he is believed to have survived till 575. In his ninety-third year he is said to have written an educational tractate for his monks, and during the thirty preceding

[1] Some German writers prefer the form Cassiodorius, but Hodgkin (*Letters of Cassiodorus*) is probably right in retaining the ordinary form. The full name is Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus. His father held high office under Odovacar and Theoderic, and his grandfather was a friend of Aëtius and visited Attila as envoy

years he composed his great work, the *Historia Getarum*, as well as various Biblical commentaries and other theological works, and edited a *Church History*, which was compiled by his disciple Epiphanius from Greek authors, and which remained for centuries a popular text-book. I have already had occasion, and shall again have occasion, to mention several of the many letters that he wrote in the name of Theoderic and other Ostrogoth sovereigns. They are exceedingly interesting and valuable, and at times natural and amusing; but their florid and pompous style is often wearisome.

The *Historia Getarum*, in twelve books, was written to magnify the ancestors of Theoderic. Cassiodorus wrongly believed the Goths to be the same race as the ancient Thracian Getae. He traced the lineage of the Amali back to the sky-god of the Getae, Zalmoxis or Zamolxis, of whom Herodotus tells,[1] and claimed the Amazons as ancient Gothic heroines. This *History* has not survived, but we possess a *résumé* of it written by a Goth, JORDANES or Jornandes, who is said to have belonged to the royal family of the Amali. It seems to have been written at Constantinople about the year 551—that is long before the death of Cassiodorus—and, if we are to believe Jordanes himself, its composition was a very remarkable feat of memory, or must have been the product of a very fertile imagination, for he tells us that he had not had the original work (twelve volumes, be it remembered) in his hands for more than three days. In his *Getica* (from which I have cited passages about the origin of the Goths, and about Attila, etc.) Jordanes, as is but natural, shows great admiration for the Gothic race, but he shared fully in the enthusiasm of Cassiodorus and his royal master for Roman civilization and in the hope of seeing the two nations fused into one—a hope that probably he, as they, outlived. In his later days he, like Cassiodorus, took to a religious life.

[1] See iv, 94–96. Herodotus does not feel quite sure whether Zalmoxis was a great man or 'nothing but a native god of the Getae.'

As a literary performance the historical work [1] of PROCOPIUS stands on a far higher level than the *Getica*. It certainly gives evidence of the late age in which it was written, but it shows a wonderful gift for stylistic imitation. In reading the narrative—a description, maybe, of a battle, or of the horrors of a siege or a pestilence—one might often imagine that it was a page out of the *Peloponnesian War*, or a very successful academic exercise in Thucydidean Greek prose with a *soupçon* of Herodotean *naïveté*. Indeed, one is at times rather apt to suspect that in his literary ardour and imitative zeal the writer may have subordinated fact to style. But besides its scholarly characteristics the work of Procopius possesses a considerable element of original thought and much descriptive power. Moreover its value as a chronicle is inestimable, for it is almost the only contemporary record that we possess of the campaigns of Belisarius and of Narses.

Procopius was a native of Caesarea, in Palestine. As a young man he came to Constantinople in the reign of Anastasius. He seems to have risen quickly into notice, for about 528 he was chosen by Justinian to accompany Belisarius on his Persian campaign, probably in the position of secretary and political adviser. Like Polybius, the Greek historian of the later Punic Wars, who accompanied Scipio to Africa and was present at the destruction of Carthage, Procopius followed Belisarius also to Africa, and here beheld Carthage captured. After the overthrow of the Vandal empire in Africa he joined the Byzantine leader in Italy, and, as we have seen, proved his gifts as a man of action during the siege of Rome and on other occasions. His *Gothic War* ends with the battle on Vesuvius and the death of Theia. Its final sentence is strongly reminiscent of Thucydides: 'Thus terminated the eighteenth year of the Gothic war, the history of which was written by Procopius.'

Soon after this he returned to Constantinople, where his

[1] The whole work on the Persian, Vandalic, and Gothic wars of Belisarius is in eight books, and the history is continued (after 553) in five books by Agathias.

hero Belisarius was living somewhat under a cloud, and he probably accompanied him on the campaign against the Avars in 559, which was terminated by the jealousy of Justinian (p. 149). A year or two later he was made City Prefect. It is not known when he died.

Very possibly his somewhat adulatory narrative of the campaigns of Belisarius won him and his book a cold reception at the court of Justinian. It is surmised that in order to propitiate the Emperor he composed a book (*De Aedificiis Justiniani*) describing the chief buildings erected under Justinian's auspices—a work that is of great interest to the student of architecture. Another book that was probably written by him, or inspired by him, is the *Anecdota*, which by its Latin translator is called the *Historia Arcana* ('Secret History'). It professes to give revelations of a scandalous state of things existing behind the scenes at the imperial court, and pours floods of the bitterest satire on Justinian as well as on his consort Theodora—the *ci-devant* circus-girl. If this book is by Procopius, he probably wrote it late in life, when even his *De Aedificiis* had failed to obtain him favour at court, or when his indignation at the treatment meted out to Belisarius had at last caused the cup of his long-suffering to overflow. The satire was not published until after Justinian's death in 565.

The description by Procopius of the terrible famine of 538 has already been given (p. 144), and also that of the battle on Vesuvius (p. 152). Here I shall add a brief abstract of his account [1] of the great plague which visited Constantinople about 544, and which continued its ravages intermittently during twenty years,[2] reaching Gaul (as we learn from Gregory

[1] *Persian War*, ii, 22. The passage has connexion, not with the *first* Persian campaign of Belisarius, but with the short and unsuccessful campaign of 542–43 (p. 144). It has the impress of personal experience, though on account of its plagiarisms it reads more like sensational 'copy' than the similar accounts by Thucydides, Lucretius, Boccaccio, and Defoe. Procopius returned to Constantinople in 540 with Belisarius, and evidently accompanied him on his Persian campaign and came back with him *c.* 543. Late in 544 they returned to Italy.

[2] It broke out again with great violence in 564. Justinian himself was attacked, but recovered.

of Tours) and probably Britain. The close imitation of Thucydides, both in general form and in particular expressions, will be interesting to scholars; I shall therefore here and there quote the original Greek where the language in the two writers is notably similar.

He begins by saying that 'men of presuming intellect' may perhaps attempt to discover the source of such things, which fall like lightning from heaven on the human race (*τῶν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπισκηπτόντων*), but only God knows whence they come. No circumstance of country or climate or season or race of men affected its course; it went its way, destroying or sparing as it willed. 'Therefore let everyone, whether savant or astrologer, speak on the subject according to his views, but I will record in what land it first appeared and will proceed to describe how it killed people. . . .' (*λεγέτω μὲν οὖν ὡς ἕκαστος περὶ αὐτῶν γιγνώσκει καὶ σοφιστὴς καὶ μετεωρολόγος . . . ἐγὼ δὲ . . .*) Procopius believed that it first appeared in Egypt, and found its way through Palestine in two years to Constantinople, where he himself was at that time (viz. 543–44). At first people had curious experiences of meeting spectral shapes and being wounded by them, and were immediately afterwards attacked by the pestilence. They try exorcism and prayer, but fall dead in the churches. Others shut themselves up in their houses in dread of being 'called' by demons. But even in dreams the horrid apparitions come and call them. The first symptom was sudden fever, though externally (as also Thucydides says) the body was not hot to the touch. In a day or two a bubo formed in the groin or axilla, causing the sufferers to roll in agony on the ground or cast themselves into the sea or into wells. On dissection terrible carbuncles (*ἄνθρακες*) were found inside the glandular swellings. The whole body, moreover, was covered with an eruption of black pustules as big as a lentil (*ἐξήνθει φλυκταίναις μελαίναις ὅσον φάκου μέγεθος*. Thucydides has *φλυκταίναις μικραῖς καὶ ἕλκεσιν ἐξηνθηκός*). If the bubo burst recovery sometimes followed, but many who survived were attacked by paralysis, especially of the tongue. 'Now when all the sepulchres that already existed were full, and all

the men who had been employed to bury the dead in the open country had disappeared, then those whose duty it was to undertake the burial of corpses, being no longer able to keep pace with the number of those who died, ascended the towers of the city-wall in the Sycaean ward, and having removed the roofs threw the dead bodies pell-mell down into the towers; and when they had stuffed them all, so to speak, brim-full, they put the roofs on again. And the evil stench that thence reached the city increased the distress of the inhabitants, especially if a wind happened to be blowing from that quarter.'

CHAPTER III

ST. BENEDICT

WE have lately seen how Cassiodorus, after some thirty years of high office as the counsellor and intimate friend of several sovereigns, withdrew from the world and spent the last third of his life in the seclusion of a monastery on the remote southern sea-coast of Calabria. This case is one of many which bear testimony to the very strong attraction exercised in these earlier ages of the Church by monasticism.

It will be remembered that the wild extravagances of Egyptian and Eastern anchoretism, when introduced into Italy, produced a movement which, modified by the less excitable nature of the Western and Northern races, resulted in a very widespread adoption of monastic life. Favoured by the Roman Church, which had been won over by the arguments of Athanasius and had recognized the wisdom of making use of the new religious enthusiasm, monasticism spread with great rapidity to the most distant bounds of the Western Empire, and even beyond these bounds—to the wilds of Ireland and Wales, where, until the British Church was almost exterminated by the pagan Angles, some notable monasteries formed the centres of missionary work and of intellectual life. In Italy during these ages there were among all classes many who naturally yearned for the sweets of solitude and contemplation, wearied out as they were by the endless horrors and dangers of war and the endless bickerings of religious discord, and who found no satisfaction for the higher instincts of faith, hope, or charity amid their formal professions of submission to a Church which seemed to demand nothing but a superstitious

veneration for certain abstruse, and often unintelligible, formulae and for the miraculous powers of old bones and other such fetishes. All forms of monachism are due, as will be generally conceded, to perversions of instincts the free exercise of which in ordinary life is amply provided for by Christianity. Of these forms the most perverted was of course the tragically grotesque phenomenon of Oriental anchoretism. Western monasticism was very much more reasonable, and if we take into account the political, ecclesiastical, and social conditions of that age (so essentially different from ours) and the almost entire absence of any outlets for religious, intellectual, and philanthropic enthusiasms, we may find the practice of withdrawal from such an unsatisfactory world not unjustifiable, especially when the ideals of solitude and self-salvation were succeeded by those of religious brotherhood and hard work—whether manual or intellectual—and still more when, in a later day, self-denying service to the needs of others inspired St. Francis and his first disciples.

Cassiodorus founded a hermitage for solitaries and a monastic community the members of which devoted their time to religious exercises, contemplation, and intellectual work. Except that in Benedictine monasteries manual rather than intellectual work was regarded as indispensable, the great difference between Benedict and Cassiodorus, as founders, is not at first sight apparent. But St. Benedict was not merely the founder of monasteries; he was the creator of the first great *monastic Order* of Western Christianity and is the 'patriarch' of four other important Orders of reformed Benedictines.[1] Whether the invention of monastic Orders—which,

[1] Camaldolenses, Vallombrosians, Carthusians, Cistercians. It should be remembered, firstly, that St. Macarius and St. Basil had already founded a Rule and an Order in the East, and, secondly, that though St. Augustine (of Hippo) died just half a century before the birth of St. Benedict, and though he is said to have instituted a community and a Rule, no actual Order of Augustines existed till about the ninth century, when Leo III incorporated all the non-monastic clergy into an Order under the so-called Augustine Rule. Later, Innocent IV and Alexander IV brought all hermits and independent confraternities under the same Rule (the 'Austin Friars'). In order to effect

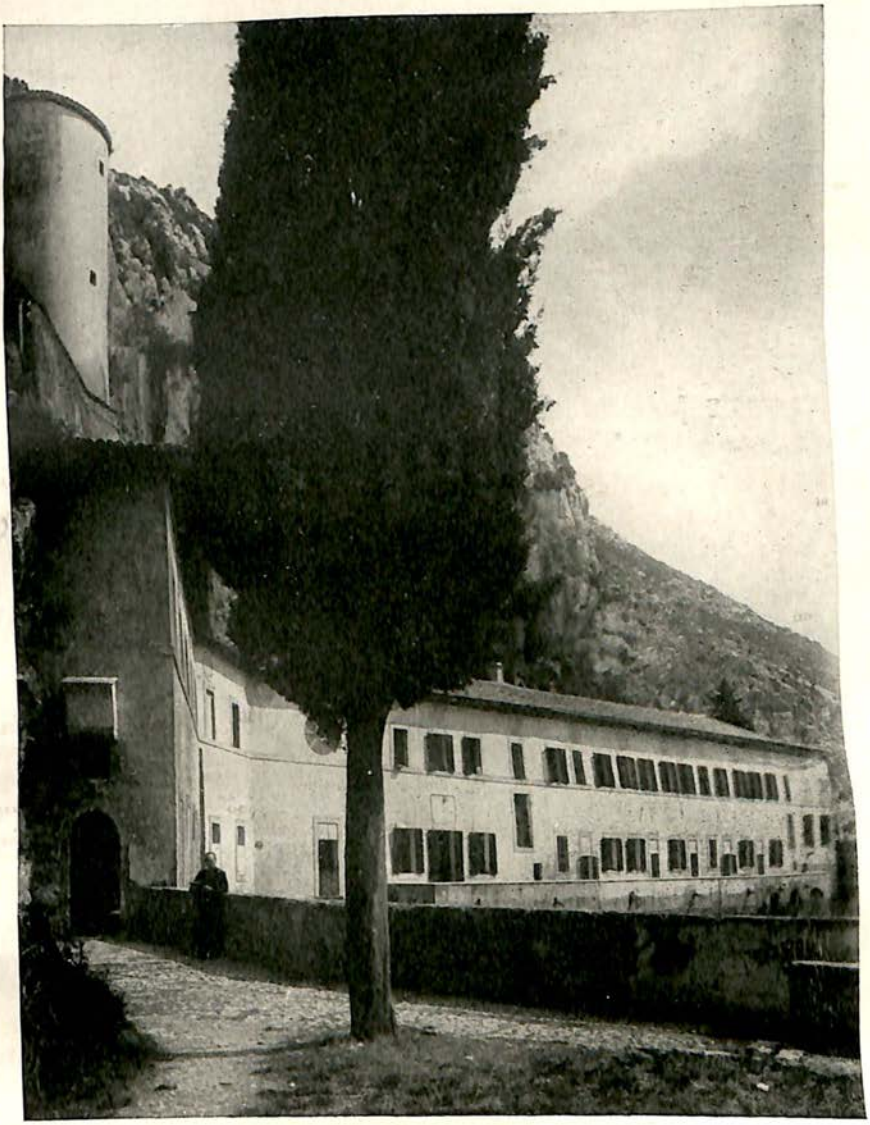
curiously, took place in the very year in which Justinian expelled the last philosophers from Athens—was a misfortune or not for mankind need not here be discussed. That it has affected enormously, for good or for evil—perhaps for both —the evolution of European civilization is unquestionable, and this lends a special interest to the facts connected with the foundation of that Order which so rapidly drew into its organization almost all the monastic institutions of Western Europe,[1] and which for seven centuries—that is, till the days of St. Francis and St. Dominic—was, if we except the early, half-organized Augustines, the only Order of Western Christianity.

The life of St. Benedict is related fully and with many fantastic legendary accretions by Gregory the Great, who is said by some to have been born on the very day on which the saint died (March 21, 543). Benedict (*b.* 480) was a native of Norcia, a little town in the Umbrian mountains to the west of Spoleto. When a youth of about fifteen he went to study at Rome—then under the rule of Odovacar—but the life led by his fellow-students became so intolerable to him that he withdrew to the solitudes of the Apennines, near to the sources of the Arno. He had been followed thither by his nurse, or foster-mother, whose affectionate anxiety for his creature comforts, coupled with the obtrusive admiration of the country people for his saintly life and his early-developed gift of wonder-working, compelled him to escape. He took refuge in a cave, or cleft in the rocks, near Subiaco, on the Upper Anio—some fifteen miles south of Vicovaro, Horace's Varia, which is not very far from the site of his Sabine farm in the Digentia valley.

At Subiaco he lived for some time as an anchoret in his cave, his food being supplied by a monk, and afterwards by shepherds, who let it down into his grotto by means of a rope. But he must sometimes have left his retreat, if it was during

this a miracle was considered necessary, St. Augustine appeared in a vision and threatened recalcitrants with the scourge.

[1] Charles the Great had inquiries made and found that no other monks but Benedictines were discoverable in his Empire.



15. Monastero del Sacro Speco
Subiaco

this period that he used to punish himself for amorous memories of a Roman beauty by rolling naked in a thorny thicket—which henceforth brought forth roses, the lineal progenitors, it is said, of those shown to the modern visitor in the garden of the monastery.[1]

At length Benedict's saintly life induced the monks of Vicovaro to choose him as their abbot. His Rule, however, proved too strict for the dissolute community. They tried to poison him; but when he blessed the cup presented him it fell from the murderer's hand—an incident depicted in many Benedictine paintings. Then he returned to his former haunts, and being there joined by many disciples he took up his abode in the 'Sacred Cavern,' rather higher up the hill than his original grotto,[2] and caused to be erected in the neighbourhood twelve monasteries, among them the original of what later was dedicated as a convent to his sister Scholastica. This convent, with large additions made in the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, forms at present one of the sights of Subiaco. It was in this building that in 1465 the first Italian printing-press was set up. Benedict seems to have acted on the principle of avoiding rather than resisting evil. Certain clerics, it is said, jealous of his success, hired women to corrupt the morals of his monks and to disturb his earthly Paradise. In a sudden access of disgust he abandoned his twelve monasteries and once more set out to seek some peaceful retreat. He wandered southwards and arrived at Cassinum—or San Germano, as it was called in the later Middle Ages[3]—about halfway between Rome and Naples. Above the town, which lies on the Rapido, a tributary of the Liris, rises Monte Cassino, a bare limestone ridge some 1700 feet high. Here still existed

[1] A variation of the legend affirms that the brambles and briers, diligently propagated, existed till the time of St. Francis, at whose visit to Subiaco (1216) they changed into roses—a very suggestive allegory!

[2] The *sagro Speco*, in connexion with the lower of two churches, has its rocky walls adorned with old frescos, mostly of the thirteenth century, as have also the churches. In one of the side chapels is an ancient portrait of St. Francis *without* stigmata or nimbus; therefore evidently dating from before 1228.

[3] It has been called Cassino again only since 1871.

a temple and grove with statues and altars dedicated to Apollo and Venus, and sacrifice, it is said, was still made to these deities—or demons—by the country-folk. Benedict preached Christ to this 'folk deluded' and persuaded them to demolish the shrine and the altars of the 'high place' and to cut down the grove, and on this site he built shrines to John the Baptist and Martin of Tours. Then still higher up the mountain he founded (in 529) what for more than thirteen centuries has been venerated as the chief monastery of Western Christendom, and what during the Dark Age of European history was the chief of the rare refuges of ancient art and learning, and harboured within its walls many a world-weary prince, warrior, and man of letters.

From Monte Cassino one overlooks the beautiful valley of the Liris, so extolled in classic verse—

rura, quae Liris quieta
Mordet aqua, taciturnus amnis.[1]

Westward lies Aquinum, birthplace of Juvenal and of the 'Angelic Doctor,' while to the south one catches glimpses of the sea and the country of Minturnae, Caieta, and Sinuessa—all of which names awaken memories of Horace and Virgil, and of the days when Rome was mistress of the known world. And then one thinks of the long Dark Age that followed the fall of Rome, and tries to realize how from these very walls, first built by Benedict, men gazed down on the devastating bands of countless invaders—Goths, and Byzantines, and Lombards, and Saracens, and Normans, and Germans, and French, and Spaniards—moving, as it were, in almost continuous line through the vista of nigh a thousand years.[2]

The site, and the coming of Benedict, are described by

[1] Horace, *Carm.* i, 31. The lower course of the Liris is now called the Garigliano.

[2] An old Monte Cassino record, known as *La cronaca di San Benedetto*, written about 848–68, gives a graphic account of the devastations of the Saracens in the surrounding country and the dangers and terrors to which the monks were exposed for a long time. In 883 the place was captured and burnt by the Mohammedans. See Count Balzani's *Cronache italiane*.

Dante—or rather by the saint himself; for Dante meets him in the sphere of Saturn amidst the spirits of contemplation, who in the form of star-like splendours are ascending and descending the great golden stair that, like Jacob's ladder, slopes up from earth to the highest heaven. 'That mountain,' says St. Benedict, 'on the side of which Cassino lies was frequented of old upon its summit by a folk deluded and evilly disposed; and I am he who first carried up thither the name of Him who brought Truth down to the earth; and so abundant was the grace of God that shone upon me that I drew away the neighbouring towns from that impious worship which once seduced the world.' Dante then makes the saint lament the degeneracy of his Order and speak with praise and affection of St. Romuald of Ravenna, the founder (*c.* 1000) of the Reformed or White Benedictines, known as the *Camaldolesi*.[1] Romuald revived, and made even more stringent, the original 'New Rule' of Benedict, the seventy-three articles of which, founded on the teachings of St. Paul and partly borrowed from the Oriental Rule of St. Macarius, enjoined, among other things, community of goods, absolute obedience, absolute equality, and manual labour—ignoring all distinctions of class or race and forbidding leisure (*otiositas*) as an enemy of the soul, on the principle that *laborare est orare*.

Towards the end of his life Benedict was joined by his sister, St. Scholastica, who took up her residence in a cell some distance from the monastery. She is remembered by the lover of Italian art by the fact that two incidents connected with her are found depicted in Benedictine paintings. Sometimes she is represented praying that her brother, who was visiting her and wished to return, should be prevented—a prayer that was fulfilled by the sudden outburst of a violent storm. Other pictures represent Benedict watching a bird flitting away towards heaven—the bird signifying the soul

[1] So called probably from the ground or house (*Campo* or *Ca'* Maldoli) given by a count of this name to Romualdo. Camaldoli Monastery is in the Casentino, not so very far from Vallombrosa.

of his sister, who died two days after the afore-mentioned visit.

About 542 the Gothic king Baduila (Totila) visited St. Benedict. The saint is said to have recognized him though disguised, to have reproved him sternly for his devastations, and to have prophesied his death—which, however, did not take place for ten years. Shortly afterwards, in March 543, Benedict himself died. His body, as well as that of his sister, is said to lie under the high altar in the abbey church of Monte Cassino. This church (entirely rebuilt in the seventeenth century) contains little or nothing [1] in its architecture or decorations that is older than the eleventh century, which is the supposed age of the bronzen door of Byzantine work. The monastery has suffered numerous demolitions. In 589, only sixty years after its foundation, it was destroyed by the Lombards. On this occasion the monks removed in a body to Rome, where they remained for 130 years. In 883 the place was taken and burnt by the Saracens, and the monks escaped to Capua and Teano; but by 886 they had rebuilt their *Badia* (abbey). Like other monasteries of Italy, that of Monte Cassino has been secularized (1866) and appropriated as a national monument. It however still contains a seminary and is inhabited by about forty monks. The library, once of world-wide fame, still possesses many valuable manuscripts. By the age of Dante it seems to have fallen into great neglect, as may be seen from an account [2] given by Benvenuto, the Dante commentator, of a visit paid to it by Boccaccio, who found 'the place of so great treasures without any door or other fastening,' and 'grass growing upon the windows and all the books and shelves covered with dust. . . . And from some of the books whole sheets had been torn out, in others the margins of leaves had been clipped. . . . And so, grieving and weeping, he withdrew; and coming out into the cloister he met a monk and asked him why those most precious

[1] The court in which the church stands has ancient columns which are sometimes said to be the columns originally belonging to the temple of Apollo, or Venus, mentioned on p. 190.

[2] Benvenuto's comment on *Par.* xxii, 75. It is given by Longfellow.

books were thus mutilated. And he replied that some of the monks, wishing to gain a few ducats, cut out handfuls of the leaves and made psalters to sell to boys; and likewise of the margins they made breviaries, which they sold to women. Now therefore, O scholar, rack thy brain in the making of books!'

CHAPTER IV

JUSTINIAN

DURING the first eight years of his reign Justinian had but little direct connexion with Italy, and although after 535, during a third of a century, the history of that unfortunate country was made principally by the desperate struggles of Goths against Byzantines and by a brief Byzantine supremacy, nevertheless the annals of the Byzantine court have by no means the importance for a writer on Italy that they have for one who is tracing the course of the so-called Roman Empire from the fall of Rome in 476 to the theoretical extinction of the genuine imperial title on its usurpation by a woman at Constantinople and its theoretical [1] revival at Rome in the person of Charles the Great—or for one who is intending to follow the fortunes of the so-called Byzantine Emperors till the capture of Constantinople by the Turks.

It will therefore suffice if I give a brief account of Justinian's personality and surroundings, and dwell a little longer upon two subjects in connexion with which his influence affected the history of Italy and of European civilization, namely, legislation and architecture.

It will be remembered how Justinian, a Dardanian peasant of obscure race, accompanied as a lad his uncle Justin to Constantinople, and how ultimately Justin was proclaimed Emperor, and left the throne to his nephew. Some six years before he received the imperial diadem Justinian was made Consul by his uncle, now an old man of over seventy years.

[1] To whatever conclusion theories may lead us, it was the general belief of the Middle Ages that the Roman Empire *did* still exist. Perhaps that should settle the question for us.

It was characteristic of the younger man's love of display and his methods of courting popularity that this event was rendered more than usually conspicuous by splendid shows—not of gladiators, for such combats had been long abolished even at Rome, and had never been allowed at Constantinople, but of almost equally disgusting contests of ferocious wild beasts. Henceforth he assumed a large share in the government, and in 527, when at the age of forty-five he was proclaimed an Augustus, Justin gave over the reins entirely into his hands, and died shortly afterwards.

Some years before his election as Consul Justinian had conceived a passionate affection for a woman named Theodora, whose career, as described by Procopius, or whoever may be the author of the *Anecdota*, offers the most astonishing example of indescribable profligacy combined with qualities that proved capable of permanently securing the devoted affection of a good, if rather purblind and self-satisfied, man, and apparently also the submissive acquiescence, if not the respect, of the people, though that people was called upon to reverence as their Empress one who, as an actress in licentious comedy, had been wont to expose her person with incredible shamelessness to the laughter and applause of the crowded theatre.

If we may believe the author of the *Anecdota*, Theodora was a daughter of a Cyprian who was 'bear-keeper' to the Byzantine Circus. After a girlhood spent amid such scenes as have been described, and many others that are indescribable, she accompanied some official of high rank to Egypt. Being repudiated by him on account of her immoralities, she spent some years in the East, occupied in no very honourable fashion, and at length returned to Constantinople, where she seems to have adopted a more decent style of life, possibly with the object of securing a husband. This object she successfully attained, for Justinian, then at the prime of life, and as Patrician, and perhaps Consul, already the most important man in the Eastern Empire, not merely fell desperately in love with her, but was so determined to make her his wife,

and his future Empress, that, after the death of Justin's consort (whose upbringing as a simple Dardanian maiden made her a severe judge), he persuaded his uncle to pass a law legitimizing such marriages; and soon afterwards he celebrated his nuptials (*c.* 525). Moreover, when he was crowned as Emperor he not only caused an imperial diadem to be placed on her head by the patriarch, but he 'seated her on the throne,' says Gibbon, 'as an equal and independent colleague in the sovereignty of the Empire; and an oath of allegiance was imposed on the governors of the provinces in the joint names of Justinian and Theodora.' Inspired by this affectionate respect, to which he seems to have remained constant during the twenty-four years of his married life, he even attributed the wisdom of many of his laws[1] to the 'sage counsel of his most revered consort, whom he had received as a gift from the Deity.'

On the other hand, she is described, not only by the author of the *Anecdota* but by various orthodox writers, as a fiend of hell. She is accused of the foulest crimes, such as the murder of her only son[2] and of many distinguished persons, not a few of whom are said to have ended their existence in her secret subterranean dungeons and torture-chambers. She is also accused of what was thought far worse—of heretical proclivities and of an insolence so audacious that it allowed her to contradict and otherwise worry even the Pope himself. But it is only fair to add that she is known to have spent money very lavishly for charitable purposes, one of which purposes was the foundation of a large Refuge or Penitentiary for Magdalenes. Monasteries and hospitals received her liberal support, and many churches—among which were S. Vitale at Ravenna and Sta. Sofia at Constantinople—were indebted to her generosity. Moreover, whatever may have been her failings,

[1] Thus in one of his many *Novellae*, or supplementary laws (viii, 1), quoted by Gibbon.

[2] The youth, left behind as an infant in the East, presented himself, it is said, at the palace in Constantinople in order to claim relationship, and was never seen again. Gibbon seems to believe the story. A daughter of Justinian and Theodora is said to have died in infancy.

or even her crimes, we cannot deny that she possessed courage, and that her courage on the occasion of the famous *Nika* tumult [1] saved her lord and master from cowardly flight, and probably from an ignominious death. She bade him flee, if so he wished, but refused to do so herself, vowing she would die rather as an Empress.

As for her personal appearance, the face of Theodora is described in the *Anecdota* as pale and strikingly handsome, with eyes that flashed 'furious and concentrated' glances (*γοργὸν καὶ συνεστραμμένον*). In stature she was somewhat short (*κολοβός*), but otherwise her figure was of the most exquisite proportions and every movement indescribably graceful. It may be noted in passing that in the Ravenna mosaic (of which more later) her height exceeds that of all her court ladies, and even that of the attendant ecclesiastics.

Whatever glory Justinian may have gained in the opinion of his contemporaries, or in the opinion of such as Dante, by the triumphs of his arms in Africa and Italy—triumphs which owed very little to him, seeing that his really disgraceful neglect and still more disgraceful jealousy again and again ruined the opportunities of his best general—it is unquestionably through his laws, or rather through the codification of Roman law—what Dante calls 'mending the bridle of Italy' (*Purg.* vi, 58)—that he merits the gratitude of posterity.

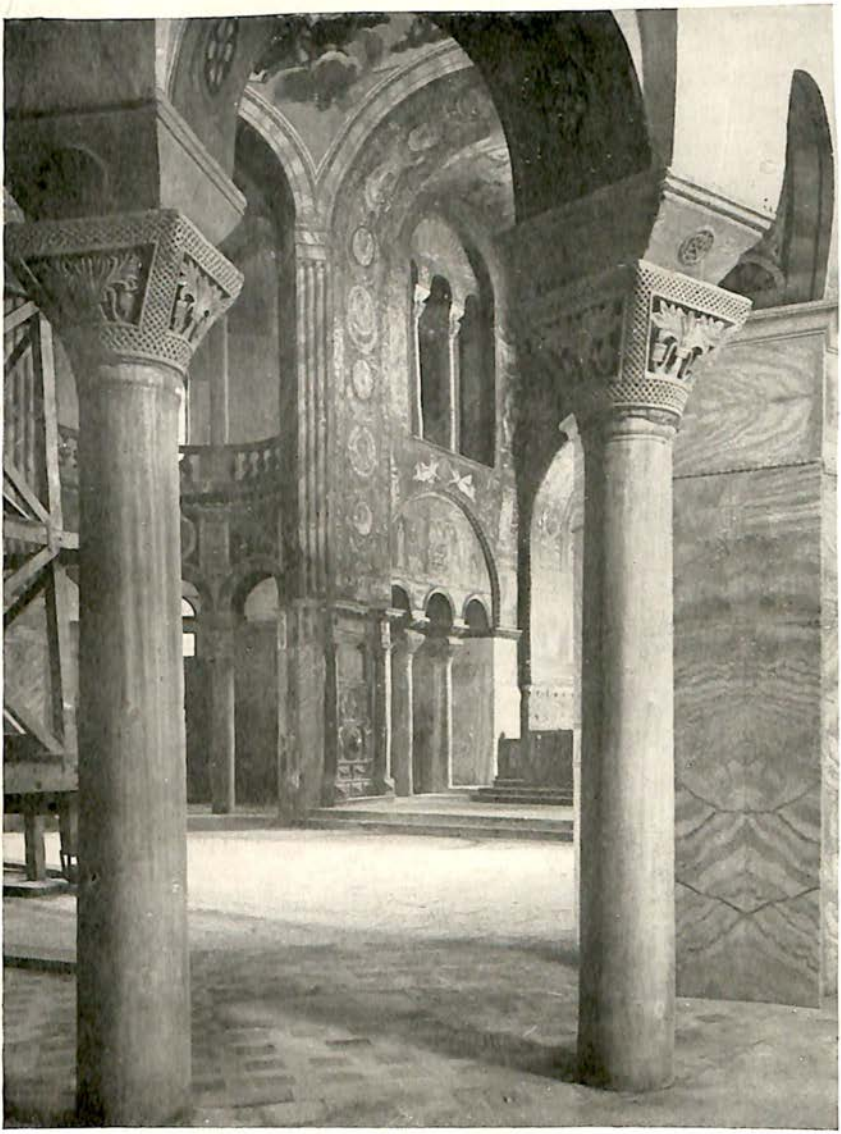
In the *Paradiso* (vii, 6) Dante describes the spirit of Justinian as one on which a twofold light is thrown—*i.e.* the glory of the warrior and the legislator. In the sixth canto Justinian's spirit gives Dante a magnificent description of the victorious progress of the Roman Eagle from the days of Aeneas to those of Charles the Great, and speaks thus of himself: 'I was Caesar and am now Justinian [*i.e.* no longer with an earthly title here in heaven], who from the laws took away the useless and redundant. And ere I became intent on this work I believed there

[1] For a vivid account of the celebrated four factions, or racing-clubs, of the Roman Circus (*white, red, green,* and *blue*) and the exceedingly serious disorders caused by their murderous feuds, see Gibbon, xl, 2, and the commentators on Juvenal, *Sat.* xi, 193 *sq.*—a passage which, *mutatis mutandis,* is wonderfully up to date. The exclamation *Nika* means 'Conquer!'

to be in Christ one nature, not more [that is, he was a Monophysite, or Eutychian, like Theodora], and with this faith I was content; but blessed Agapetus, who was the supreme pontiff, directed me by his words to the pure faith. As soon as with the Church I moved my feet it seemed good to God in His grace to inspire me with this high task, and I gave myself wholly to it; and arms I left to my Belisarius, whom heaven's right hand so manifestly helped that it was a sign that I should repose.' Repose he certainly did in regard to war, being content to reap where others sowed, but his activities in some other respects were notable.

The *Corpus Juris* which was compiled by his commissioners is still accepted as the main authority for Roman law as practised in Europe. These commissioners, presided over by a certain Tribonian, a Pamphylian savant of literary accomplishments equal to those of a Pico Mirandola or a Bacon, performed during the years 530–33 the enormous task of drawing up the CODEX of imperial *Constitutiones* (edicts, decrees, etc.) in twelve books, the PANDECTAE ('All-containers'—a compendium of some two thousand volumes of the old laws and *senatusconsulta* of Rome reduced to a digest of fifty books), and a shorter manual in four books called the INSTITUTIONES. In addition to this huge body of law, which was republished much amplified within six years, Justinian, somewhat unfortunately, issued in later years (535–65) very numerous *Novellae* (New Statutes), supplementing or modifying the laws of his Code—and frequently modifying them so as to legalize his extortions, or those of Theodora; and in this he is said to have relied greatly on the co-operation of his Pamphylian president, Tribonian. The three chief works are composed in a silver-age Latin of remarkable quality. The *Novellae* are mostly in Greek. A manuscript copy of the *Pandects* that perhaps dates from the reign of Justinian, and certainly not later than the seventh century, is one of the treasures of the Laurentian Library [1] at Florence. It is said to be the original

[1] In connexion with the church of S. Lorenzo, founded by St. Ambrose, rebuilt by Brunelleschi, and famous for Michelangelo's statues.



16. S. Vitale
Ravenna

from which all other existing MSS. of the work are derived. In 1137 it was brought from Amalfi by the Pisan fleet, and after Pisa had been taken by the Florentines in 1406 it was transported to Florence. Its rich binding, mentioned by Gibbon, was stolen in 1783 (just about the time when Gibbon was writing his account of the *Pandects*) by the Grand Duke Peter Leopold, who sold it for thirty gold deniers.

It was, as Dante tells us, while Justinian was occupied with this legislative work that he began to free his mind from heretical errors and to move his feet with the pacings of the orthodox Church. If it was Pope Agapetus through whose influence this was achieved, it must have happened in 535—the very year in which Ostrogothic Italy was invaded by Justinian's Byzantine troops from the north and by Belisarius and his African veterans from the south. Ere long the busy mind of the Emperor, ever on the alert to formulate, and to impose its formulae on the world, was so wholly engrossed by abstruse doctrinal problems that nothing else was regarded—neither the pitiable state of Italy, devastated by war and famine and pestilence, nor the grievances and miseries of the Byzantine provinces, which were drained of their wealth by the intolerable taxation necessary to cover the lavish expenditure of public money. The supreme legislator, whose laws were of so little use to his own people, was now fired by the ambition to become the supreme Christian dogmatist of his age. 'Our chief solicitude,' he says in an epistle written about this time, 'has been turned towards the true dogmas of the Faith.'

Applying with special emphasis to his own case the theory of the divine right of monarchs, he regarded his power as directly delegated by heaven and in no wise derived from the suffrage of the army, the Senate, or the people, and as the delegate, or vicar, of the Deity he felt empowered to ignore the decrees of synods and of Popes, and to recognize as alone of any authority a general Council summoned by himself. Such a line of conduct, vigorously imitated by Belisarius, who deposed a Pope, and by Narses, who shipped recalcitrant

bishops off to Constantinople, could not but excite the most vehement opposition on the part of the ecclesiastics, and especially on the part of the Roman Church.

Matters were made worse by the discovery, either made by Justinian himself, or imparted to him by some meddling Eastern prelate, that a century before, in the resolutions of the Council of Chalcedon (451), three Oriental bishops had managed to insinuate three distinct affirmations which emitted a perceptible odour of heresy. In his righteous indignation Justinian assumed the powers of excommunication and in the name of the Trinity anathematized these 'Three Clauses,' calling upon the faithful to accept the version proposed by himself. But neither orthodox nor heterodox showed any sign of acquiescing in this appropriation of papal thunderbolts. Finally the incensed Emperor summoned Pope Vigilius to Constantinople. This Pope (after the death of good old Agapetus and the deposition of his successor by Belisarius) had been placed on the chair of St. Peter by the influence of Theodora, who expected much from his professed leanings towards Monophytism, the form of heresy specially favoured by her; but he deceived her hopes, showing an inclination to support the ultra-orthodox zeal of her converted husband, and at Constantinople, which he reached shortly before, or shortly after, her death (July 1, 548), he published a condemnation of these notorious 'Three Clauses.'

But the tempest that abdication of his rights aroused among the Catholics of the West caused him to retract and to oppose the Emperor's claims to spiritual jurisdiction. The result was that he was imprisoned on an island in the Sea of Marmora, and it was not till the sixth year of his exile (554) that, having once more anathematized the heretical clauses, he was allowed to return to Italy. This however he never reached, for he died on his journey thither, at Syracuse. Doubtless the submission of Vigilius and Justinian's friendly feelings towards the next Pope—the 'deacon Pelagius'—exercised for a time a favourable influence on the relations of the Emperor with the Roman Church, and one result of these improved relations

was evidently the so-called Pragmatic Sanction, a decree which was intended to safeguard civil and ecclesiastical authority in Italy against the encroachments of the military power, and which gave the Church some important judicial prerogatives.

These dreary religious discords may seem to have for us very little interest, but, however trivial they may be in themselves, they have historical importance. Even in our own age doctrinal diversity, more perhaps than radical difference of creeds, is sometimes a dangerous solvent of political unity, and in the age of Justinian the problem of government was very largely affected by such influences. The enmity which existed between the various Christian sects was more rancorous and embittered than had been the hostility of the Church against paganism, and no political unity was to be hoped for without uniformity in doctrinal questions. That Justinian's main object was to attain such uniformity cannot be doubted, but, like Zeno with his *Henotikon*, he only succeeded in widening schisms; and more especially widened was the gulf between the East and the West—a gulf that a few generations later was rendered impassable by the outbreak of the fierce and long-continued quarrel about the cult of images. Moreover, Justinian's religious mania had a most momentous, and perhaps disastrous, effect on the fortunes of Italy, for it caused him to neglect shamefully the well-being and defence of the newly reconquered diocese of his Empire, and thus it was one of the chief influences that prepared the way for the coming of the Lombards.

In a later chapter I shall touch on some of the characteristics of that style in architecture and decorative art the presence of which in Italy is mainly due to the prolonged occupation of some of the country by the Byzantines. Here I shall briefly mention some of the buildings erected by Justinian, or in his reign, and describe a well-known mosaic which offers us his portrait and that of Theodora.

In his book on the buildings of Justinian Procopius describes or mentions a very large number of churches, palaces, aque-

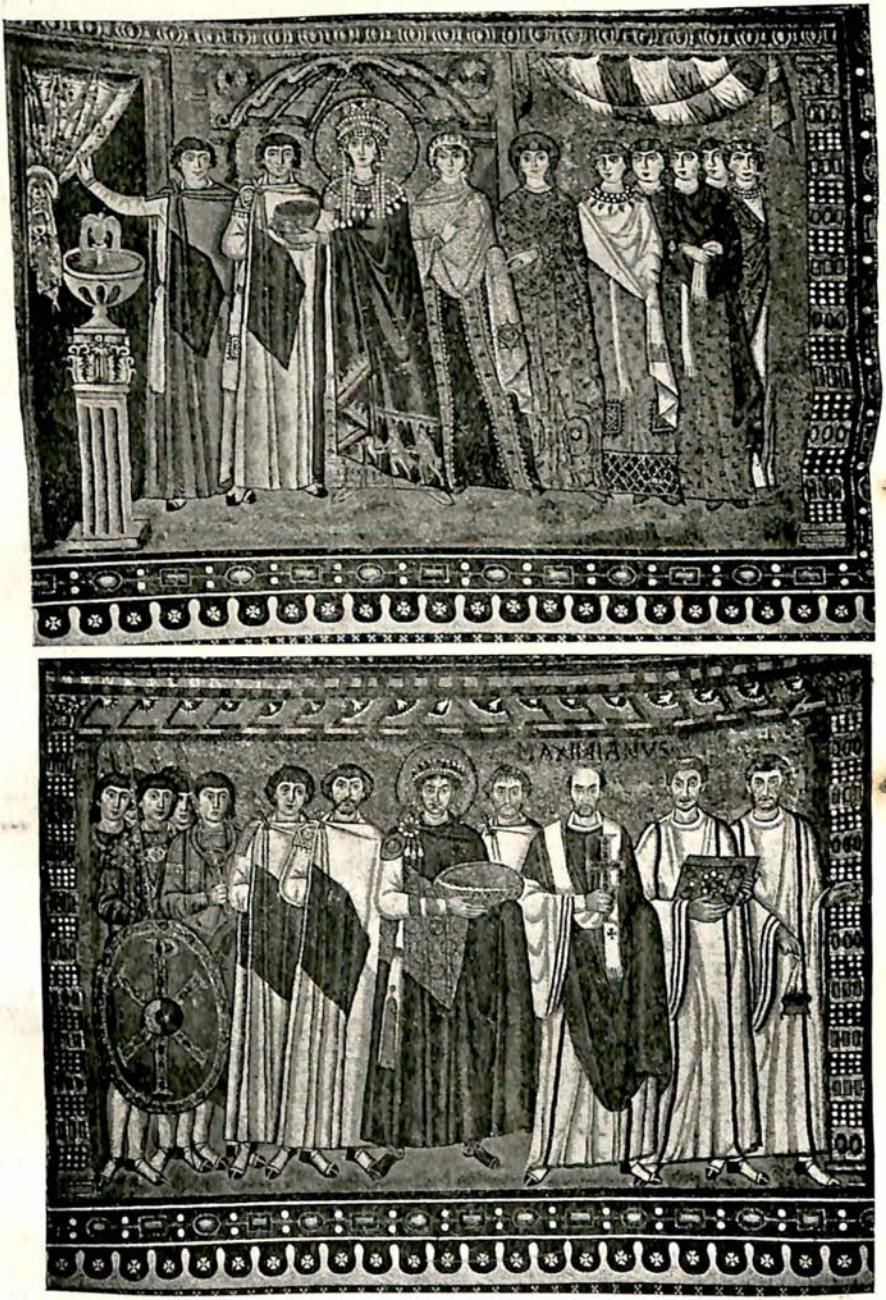
ducts, hospitals, bridges, and other edifices erected by the Emperor,[1] or under his auspices, not only in Constantinople but in Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and other parts of Africa. The book was evidently written not long after the death of Theia and the return of Procopius to Constantinople (p. 182) and before Byzantine supremacy had been firmly re-established in Italy. This probably explains the fact that no Italian buildings are mentioned.

In and around Constantinople Justinian built, or rebuilt, about twenty-five churches, many of which were richly decorated with marbles and mosaics. Most were doubtless in the new 'Byzantine' style, which was superseding the old basilica style, and of these the chief was the great cathedral church dedicated to the Sacred Wisdom (*Hagia Sophia*) of God and generally known as the church of St. Sophia, or St. Sofia.[2] A basilica of the same name had been built by Constantine on the same site. It had been burnt during the tumults caused by the exile of the patriarch Chrysostom, and a second edifice, a basilica with a wooden roof, was likewise destroyed by fire during the *Nika* riots, of which I have lately made mention. The St. Sophia of Justinian still exists—that is, the building as restored by him after an earthquake which caused the collapse of much of its first great dome. The plan of this magnificent church (now—and to remain how long?—a Turkish mosque) was devised, it is said, by Anthemius of Tralles, one of five brothers of equally high renown in their various professions. Its glories, not a few of which are hidden or disfigured by Turkish fanaticism, were graphically intimated by Justinian's exclamation, 'I have vanquished thee, O Solomon!' Its architecture will be discussed when we come to the subject of Byzantine art.

Among the many other churches built by Justinian in Constantinople was a new edifice, in Byzantine style, erected

[1] 'Cemented by the blood and treasure of his people' is Gibbon's, possibly not altogether fair, comment. Justinian seems not to have built baths or theatres.

[2] The Parthenon at Athens had already been dedicated as a church to 'Hagia Sophia.'



17. Mosaics of Justinian and Theodora
S. Vitale, Ravenna

on the site of the ancient Constantinian church of the Holy Apostles. It has disappeared, but its memory is rendered interesting by the fact that it was the model on which was built St. Mark's five-domed cathedral at Venice. To Justinian is due also the Byzantine church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus, which, like S. Vitale at Ravenna, has a central octagon, whose eight arches are surmounted by a great dome. This S. Vitale is another very famous, still extant, church connected closely with the name of Justinian. It is of earlier date than St. Sophia (which was begun in 532) and is a Byzantine church of the 'central type,' constructively so like the church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus that very possibly the plans for Theoderic's Ravenna church, and perhaps the workmen, were procured from Anthemius, or some other Eastern architect; and it so happens that the very man who, as the mosaics inform us,[1] presided over the erection of S. Vitale, namely, Archbishop Ecclesius, was in Constantinople just a year before the church was founded; for, as we have already seen (p. 133), King Theoderic in the year 525 sent envoys to the Eastern court, and among these envoys, besides Pope John, was Ecclesius himself. His conduct at Constantinople evidently satisfied the Arian monarch better than that of the unfortunate Pope, for shortly after his return, and probably before Theoderic's death, he began this splendid Byzantine church, which, despite many restorations, retains something of its original beauty and magnificence. Of especial beauty are its marble columns, with their exquisitely carved capitals, and of indescribable richness are its mosaics.

Some of these magnificent mosaics were evidently put up during the life of Ecclesius (*d.* 534), for he is represented in them without *nimbus*—*i.e.* as still living. Moreover this apse-mosaic, like the groups of angels in S. Apollinare Nuovo (p. 170), distinguishes itself very strongly from most of the others by its simple and impressive grandeur, such as we find in the earlier mosaics both in Ravenna and in Rome. The others

[1] In the grand mosaic of the apse he is represented with a model of the church in his hand.

are characterized by the gorgeousness of apparel and the inartistic execution that are usual in Byzantine mosaics. These belong to the period following the capture of Ravenna (540) by Belisarius and the Byzantines, and were doubtless paid for by Justinian and Theodora, who are known to have subscribed largely for the decoration of S. Vitale. It is therefore not surprising that among these later mosaics we should have the portraits of the Emperor and the Empress, and from the *nimbus* with which each is adorned we may infer (though by no means certainly) that the mosaics were finished after 548, the date of Theodora's death, if not after Justinian's death in 565. Justinian is represented as offering a golden casket full of jewels or money to the treasure of the church and is attended by Archbishop Maximian, who consecrated the building in 547. Theodora,[1] attended by her ladies, is bringing as her offering a large chalice and is on the point of entering the church door, near which stands the symbolical font.

One more church, S. Apollinare in Classe, may here be mentioned in connexion with Justinian, for, although there may be no certain proof, it is very probable that he was personally interested in its completion, as it was built between the years 535 and 538 by the successor of Ecclesius,[2] and was, like S. Vitale, consecrated by Maximian. The town and harbour of Classe have, as has been related in a former chapter, completely disappeared, and this grand basilica of S. Apollinare stands now, like the ancient Greek temples at Paestum, in almost total solitude. Perhaps there is no other building in the world—certainly no ancient Christian church—so impressive.

[1] Her diadem, set with great pearls and precious stones, is evidently of the same profusely decorated type as that of the much later Imperial Crown (see Fig. 19 and explanation). The head-dress with its long pendants and the collar, or rather the broad cape, all thickly bejewelled (such as one sees also in many ivory carvings of the period), follow the newer fashion, which instead of the broad and heavy golden necklace introduced the *maniakon—i.e.* a textile collar, or cape, profusely set with jewels and fringed with pendants.

[2] The archbishops are regarded as the 'builders,' but the person who directed the work (not probably the *architect* of two such totally different buildings) was Julianus Argentarius ('the Treasurer'?). He perhaps stands behind Justinian in the mosaic.

18. S. Apollinare in Classe
Ravenna

Externally it has no beauty and grandeur comparable with that of a Greek temple or a Northern cathedral, although the old campanile standing in silent dignity amidst the water-lily-covered pools and swampy fields of that lonely marshland haunts one's memory; but internally this old basilica (for though it has some Byzantine details it is a genuine basilica) is one of the most majestic and most beautiful in existence.[1]

[1] See also Index under 'Churches' and 'Mosaics.'

THE
LOMBARD
DOMINATION
c. 568 - c. 700
KINGDOM OF FRANKS
CARANTANUM
CARNIOLA
AUSTRIA
NEUSTRIA
AEMILIA
ISTRIA
VENETIA
PROVINCIA
ADRIATICUM MARE
TUSCIA
DUCATUS
SPOLETANUS
ROMA
ROMANUS
DUCATUS
SAMNIUM
APULIA
BENEVENTANUS
CALABRIA
LUCANIA
DRUTTIA BRICCIA
SICILIA
CORSICA
SARDINIA
MARE
TYRRHENUM
EASTERN EMPIRE
Bellunum
Forum Iulii
Tridentum
Aquileia
Comum
Bergamus
Novaria
Mediolanum
Brixia
Vincentia
Gradus
Taurinum
Papia
Verona
Patavium
Asta
Placentia
Dertona
Ferraria
Mutina
Bononia
Ravenna
Genoa
Luna
Ariminum
Faesulae
Luca
Nicea
Pisa
Florentia
Aretium
PENTAPOLIS
Ancona
Auximum
Sena
Camerinum
Firmus
Ilva
Perusia
Rosellae
Urbs vetus
Spoletium
Suana
Horta
Ortona
Theate
Portus
Ostia
Privernum
Tarracina
Formia
Capua
Beneventum
Neapolis
Sepontum
Canusium
Salernus
Potentia
Amalphi
Acropolis
Tarentum
Brundusium
Cassianum
Lainus
Consentia
Crotona
Caralis
Lipara
Panormus
Massana
Locri
Rhegium
Tauromінium
Lilybaeum
Catana
Agrigentum
Syracusae
Melita
English Miles
0 25 50 75 100
Long. East 1/4 of Greenwich
10
14
18
46
44
42
40
38

PART III

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

568–800

OUR narrative of historical events broke off at the death of Narses, which took place probably in 567, a few months before the invasion of the Lombards, whom he is half suspected of having incited to attack Italy. I have now to sketch the history of about two centuries of Lombard domination—a period rather dark and dreary, during which many seeds, so to speak, that afterwards bore flower and fruit were maturing underground, but which in itself has little to attract us except certain interesting personalities and certain early preheraldings of the coming springtime of Italian art.

I propose therefore to summarize somewhat briefly the political incidents of these two centuries. The sources of our information are various. Among them those of most interest are the writings of Pope Gregory the Great, the Edict of King Rotharis (Roteric), the prologue to which gives numerous facts (down to about 640) which enlighten a very obscure period; and combined with the MSS. of this prologue is found an interesting *Origo Langobardorum* by some unknown Lombard writer of about 607, who gives the somewhat legendary early history of the Lombards; lastly, we have the most valuable *Historia Langobardorum* by Paul Warnefrid, commonly known as Paul the Deacon, a Lombard who lived for some time at the court of Charles the Great and finally retired to the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino, where he died, probably about 800. His *History*, which has been already cited on several occasions, gives a most graphic description of the wretched state of Italy at the time of the Lombard invasion, and a

series of vivid portraits of the Lombard kings down to the reign of Liutprand, the narrative being interspersed with many stories of Herodotean type. The work is unfinished, perhaps because, being himself a Lombard and yet owing much to the favours of the Frankish monarch, he found the conquest of Italy by the Franks too painful to describe. We shall meet him again, especially after we reach the days of Gregory and Queen Theodelinda.

According to Paul the Deacon the Longobardi or Langobardi ('Long-beards') came, like the Goths, from Scandinavia — whither, it may be assumed, their ancestors found their way from the central regions of Asia. They are mentioned by a Latin writer, Velleius Paterculus, who during the reign of Augustus served in Germany under Tiberius. He describes them as of a ferocity 'more than German,' and as dwelling on the Lower Elbe. About 178 they took part in the southward movement attempted by various tribes, which was foiled by Marcus Aurelius. Then for three centuries we hear no more of them, but they probably were among the many allies of Attila, and apparently about 508 they pushed southwards from the Elbe and, having conquered the Herulians, established themselves on the northern banks of the Danube. Some forty-four years later (viz. in 552), as will be remembered, the Lombard auxiliaries in the army of Narses behaved with such savagery that he was compelled to bribe them to return to their home in Rugiland. The king, or chieftain, of these Lombard auxiliaries was Audoin, whose somewhat mythical ancestors, or predecessors, scarcely need record here, but whose son, Alboin, now claims our attention.

Opposite the Lombards of Rugiland (the region along the north banks of the Danube between Regensburg and Vienna) were the Gepidae, who seem to have moved westwards from Dacia and to have occupied the country (Pannonia, etc.) abandoned by Theoderic and his Ostrogoths. These Gepidae were in 554 proving troublesome to the Empire, and Justinian, adopting the traditional policy of the Byzantine court, bribed the Lombards to attack them. In the first campaign

the young Alboin killed Torismund, the son of the Gepidan king, but the war continued, and it was not till the Lombards had bought with a third of their cattle and much land and booty the alliance of the Avars—those ferocious savages of Turkish stock who had so alarmed Justinian and had been refused tribute by Justin—that they crushed their foes in a great battle. The Gepidae seem to have been almost exterminated, for they are heard of no more as a nation, and their king Cunimund suffered the same fate as his brother Torismund, being slain by Alboin, now king of the Lombards. His head was cut off, and of the skull Alboin had a drinking-cup made. His daughter, Rosamund, was captured and forced to marry Alboin, who, it is said, had seen and loved her a good many years previously, but had been contemptuously rejected by her father.[1]

The Lombard invasion of Italy was due to several causes. One of these was doubtless the pressure exercised by the savage and importunate Avars, who themselves were probably urged westward by the advance of other Oriental races; another was, perhaps, the invitation of Narses; another again, and in itself a sufficing reason, was the fact that Italy, whose wealth and fertility always strongly attracted invaders, was known to be at this time almost defenceless. The Byzantines had failed to consolidate their conquest. Their *régime* had succeeded even less than that of the Ostrogoths in establishing itself by winning the favour, or the acquiescence, of the Italian people. Narses had so incensed the clergy and the nobles by his military despotism and the people by his extortionate avarice that, as the Roman envoys had declared to Justin, Italy, devastated by long wars, depopulated by famine and pestilence and utterly unable to take up arms in her own defence, was ready to welcome Gothic, or almost any other, domination, as likely to prove more tolerable than that of Narses and the Eastern Empire. Narses had indeed been deposed from power, but

[1] He had been, says Gibbon, engaged to the granddaughter of the Frankish king Clovis (Chlodwig). Villari says he actually *married* her (the daughter of Clothar) and that she had lately died.

his successor, Longinus, though he seems to have attempted to introduce some reforms, had proved a failure. He concerted no systematic defence, but shut himself up in Ravenna. The scattered remnants of the Gothic army doubtless made common cause with the new barbarian invader, and in about eighteen months many of the chief cities of Northern Italy surrendered or were captured by the hordes [1] of Lombards, Gepidae, Suevi, Saxons, Bulgars, and Bavarians, which, with their women, children, their cattle, and all their movable possessions, had followed Alboin across the well-known pass of the Julian Alps, so often before used by invading hosts.

Pavia offered an obstinate resistance and was besieged for three years. It was at this time a stronger and more important city than Milan, which had not recovered from its almost total destruction by the Franks, and it now became the capital of the Lombard kingdom.[2] This kingdom comprised in North Italy the two provinces of Neustria and Austria, which covered somewhat the same regions that we call Lombardy, Piemont, Emilia, and North Venetia, with the following chief cities: Verona, Vicenza, Mantua, Trento, Bergamo, Brescia, Milan, Pavia, Turin, Parma, Modena, Aquileia, Treviso. Towards the north, the west, and the east these dominions were bounded by the Alps, but towards the south Alboin extended his conquests across the Apennines and over Tuscia down to the region of Urbino and the Furlo pass (the famous *Petra intercisa*), which strategical position he seized. And so little resistance was offered in Central Italy that bands of the barbarians marched much further south and made themselves masters of all the inland regions and a considerable part of the coast-line, except where there were strongly fortified havens accessible for the Byzantine fleets. Two of their leaders then constituted themselves dukes (*duces*) of this conquered territory, the one choosing Spoleto and the other Benevento as his stronghold. These two Lombard

[1] The Saxons alone numbered 20,000. They went home later. The whole number of Alboin's fighters must have been considerable, but it seems not to have exceeded about 70,000.

[2] Alboin seems to have resided mostly at Verona, in Theoderic's palace.

dukedoms, which later proved the source of many troubles, seem from the first to have paid only a nominal allegiance to Alboin, and ere long they became practically independent.

The cities and regions of Italy that still acknowledged Byzantine supremacy and nominally formed the Exarchate [1] were the following: Ravenna and the surrounding territory (the 'Exarchate' in the limited sense of the word), with the cities of Padua, Bologna, etc.; the duchy of Venetia, *i.e.* Venice [2] and some adjacent islands and mainland territory; a part of Istria; the 'Pentapolis,' with the cities Rimini, Ancona, etc.; Genoa and the Ligurian Riviera; Rome and its 'duchy'; Naples and its territory, including Cumae and Amalfi; the 'heel and toe' of Italy; Sicily and Sardinia.

It will thus be seen that the Lombard conquest was by no means complete. For a century the domination of Italy was divided between two alien races of exceedingly diverse character—a fact that of itself tended strongly towards disintegration; and this disintegration of nationality was widened and deepened, until it became incurable, by the internal discords and constitutional weakness of the rival claimants; for since rebellion and anarchy constantly vexed the Lombard kingdom, and the Byzantines were for ever vainly struggling to maintain their authority against the rapidly growing power of the Roman Popes and the spirit of emancipation that was ever more prevalent in their Italian dependencies, in all parts of the country cities began to assume more or less independence, or to combine themselves into small independent states, causing countless political complications and rivalries.

Shortly after his capture of Pavia (572) Alboin was assassinated. The story of his death reads like some Gyges story from Herodotus and seems to have found an echo in our legend

[1] The Greek title "Exarch" was given to the Byzantine military governors in Africa and later to those in Italy. The first who officially held this title at Ravenna was probably Decius, *c.* 584. All the Byzantine domains in Italy were nominally subject to him and formed the 'Exarchate,' but many of them were practically independent of his authority.

[2] Venice, however, becomes independent in early days. See ch. iii of this Part.

of 'fair Rosamond.' At a banquet he is said to have invited, or compelled, his wife to drink from the cup which, as has been related, was formed from the skull of her father Cunimund. Rosamund revenged herself by persuading her lover, a noble named Helmechis, the armour-bearer, perhaps the foster-brother, of the king, to murder him, or, according to other accounts, to hire an assassin for the deed. Alboin, attacked during his afternoon siesta, endeavoured in vain to draw his sword, which had been tied to the scabbard by his wife, and after defending himself for some time with a stool was overpowered and slain.[1] Helmechis and Rosamund, supported by the Gepidan soldiery, attempted to seize the regal power, but had to yield to the indignation of the Lombards and appealed for help to the Byzantine governor of Ravenna, Longinus. He is said to have sent vessels up the Po and the Adige, and on these they escaped, together with Alboin's daughter Albsuinda. At Ravenna they were received with honour. Then Rosamund, perceiving that Longinus was struck with her beauty, determined to rid herself of Helmechis, who, having drunk a part of the wine that she had brought to his bathroom, detected that it was poisoned and, threatening her with his dagger, forced her to drain the rest of the deadly draught. Possibly the details of this dramatic story are fictions, built up—as is suggested by Ranke, the historian of the Popes—on some attempt, favoured by the queen, to introduce Byzantine influence, or even some plot to establish Byzantine supremacy. But truth is sometimes quite as strange as fiction, and the state of things among the Lombards was at this early stage, in spite of their professed Christianity (or rather Arianism), such as to make the tale quite credible.

However that may be, dissension and plots were evidently rife at this time, for the next king, Cleſi or Kleph, after a reign of eighteen months was assassinated—it is said, by a slave—

[1] As evidence for the truth of this story Paul the Deacon affirms that when he, as a young man (*i.e. c.* 745), was at the court of Ratchis at Pavia the king 'brought forth to show to his guests after a banquet the famous cup which Alboin had caused to be made from the skull of Cunimund, king of the Gepidae' (*Cronache ital.*, by Count Balzani).

and, as the dukes could not agree, no one was elected in his stead, but for the next ten years the dukes, of whom there seem to have been thirty-six,[1] each ruled his own dukedom without recognizing any liege-lord, and, if we may believe Paul the Deacon, most of them ruled very cruelly, evicting and not seldom killing the richer landowners, and exacting a third of incomes, sacking Catholic churches, and persecuting the clergy.

In the north the Lombards had already more than once attacked and had been worsted by the Franks, who at this time held all the Alpine frontiers to the north-west (Savoy, Switzerland, Provence, etc.), whence they could with ease sweep down on Milan and the valley of the Po, as they had done in the time of the Goths. These Franks seemed to be the only possible hope for Italy, for the Byzantine power was waning rapidly [2] and an appeal by the Romans to the Eastern Emperor (now Tiberius) had obtained no answer but the advice to try the effect of bribing the Lombards, or to induce the Franks to attack them. Doubtless the idea had been mooted before Tiberius gave this counsel of despair, and it is not surprising that about a year later (581) Pope Pelagius II wrote to the bishop of Auxerre asking him to remind the Franks that 'it was a duty imposed on them by God, as orthodox Catholics, to save Rome and all Italy from this most wicked Lombard people.' Still more effective probably proved fifty thousand gold pieces sent to the Franks by the Eastern Emperor, Maurice, who on the death of Tiberius had been elected, says Gibbon, 'from the crowd,' but who nevertheless proved worthy of the imperial dignity. The Franks seem to have reacted to these appeals, but they were at the moment so much engrossed by civil dissensions that after making one or two furious raids they again allowed themselves to be bought—

[1] The dukes of Benevento and Spoleto, already mentioned, were evidently the most powerful and most independent. The names of about twenty-five are mentioned by chroniclers.

[2] One evidence of this is the fact that in 579 the duke of Spoleto captured Classe, the port of Ravenna, which he held for nine years. About 589, it will be remembered, Monte Cassino was sacked by the Lombards of Benevento.

this time by the Lombards. Thus the Frankish conquest of Lombard Italy, which seemed quite possible and imminent, was for the time deferred.

But their alliance with the Franks had raised the hopes and courage of the Byzantines in Italy, and at Constantinople the urgent appeals that Pope Pelagius again made through his correspondent or Nuntius (*apocrisarius*) Gregory—afterwards Gregory the Great—resulted in the election of a new and enterprising [1] Exarch, Smaragdus (Smaraldo) by name, who ere long arrived with considerable forces. The Lombards, on the other hand, being without a king, were disorganized and incapable of combined action, till at last, conscious of the cause of their weakness, the rival and insubordinate dukes held a conclave at Pavia (585) and consented to accept Autharis (Auteric), the son of Clefi, as their sovereign, giving up portions of their revenues to endow the monarchy. The struggle between Lombards and Byzantines became now intensified, especially in the north and east, where two events happened that are worthy of mention: the Isola Comacina, a small rocky island in the Lake of Como which is of especial interest in regard to the origins of Lombard architecture (see p. 277), and which at this period was a strongly fortified outpost of the Byzantines, was captured by the Lombards; and, on the other hand, in 588 Smaragdus recaptured the town and haven of Classe—a feat that scarcely seems surprising, since the Byzantines were masters of the sea. Indeed it is far more surprising that the Lombards could have held the place for nine years, shut in as they were between the sea and the ramparts of Ravenna.

This desultory war was for a time interrupted by a great victory gained by Autharis over the Franks, who, once more yielding to the entreaties or bribes of the Byzantines, came

[1] Rather too enterprising. For imprisoning recalcitrant bishops he was recalled by Maurice, but was re-installed by the blood-stained usurper Phocas, to whom he erected the 'nameless column,' of which we shall hear when we come to Gregory. A score or so of Exarchs ruled at Ravenna between Decius, the first of them (*c.* 580)—for neither Narses nor Longinus was Exarch—and the surcease of the Exarchate as a Byzantine province in 752.

pouring down over the Splügen pass into the regions about Lake Como. According to Paul the Deacon so vast a slaughter of Franks had never been known before. During the interval of comparative quiet that followed this battle (589) the Lombard king, anxious to provide himself with allies in view of further molestation, proposed himself as suitor for the hand of a Bavarian princess, Theudelinde. The story of his wooing and much else about Queen Theudelinde, or Theodelinda, as she was called by the Romans, will be told on a later occasion.[1] Here it suffices to say that the marriage so enraged Childebert, the Frankish king, that he once more invaded Lombard Italy. But once more the Franks were compelled to retire on account of civil broils at home, and their retreat was hastened by an extraordinary deluge that in this year overwhelmed the lowlands of Italy, and not less by the plague, which broke out with great virulence.

Pope Pelagius was one of the many thousands of victims of this pestilence of 590. He was succeeded by Gregory. Of him we have already heard as papal nuntius at Constantinople; and we shall hear much more about him, as he was certainly one of the most interesting personalities of this age, though it may be questioned whether in the highest sense of the word he was great. In this year (590) died also King Autharis. He was probably one of the best of the Lombard rulers, although certain obscurely worded expressions of Paul the Deacon have sometimes been interpreted to mean that under his rule the Italians were still more oppressed than they had been by the dukes, and were in fact enslaved and portioned out as bondmen among the Lombards.[2] But this seems inconsistent with other passages in which he speaks of the state of

[1] Ch. i of this Part. It should be mentioned here that during this short interval of comparative peace Autharis, according to some chroniclers, made a royal progress through his kingdom, and even reached Rhegium (Reggio), in Calabria, where, on the shore of the Mediterranean, he is said to have touched with his spear the famous Rhegian column and to have exclaimed: 'This is the boundary of the realms of Autharis.' But there is possibly confusion between the Calabrian and the Emilian Reggio.

[2] *Per hospites divisi . . . tributarii efficiuntur* (ii, 32). *Populi aggravati per langobardos hospites partiuntur* (iii, 16).

the country at this time. 'Neither acts of violence were known,' he says, 'nor any revolutionary plots; no one oppressed another unjustly, no one despoiled another; there were no thefts, no highway robberies; everyone went his way whithersoever he wished without fear or anxiety.'

That the Lombards were originally barbarians of a wilder and more inartistic type than the Goths is apparent; they seem to have had little of the sensibility for Southern art and literature that is so noticeable in the case of Theoderic and of Amalasuntha and even of Theodahad; but on the other hand they were evidently less *brutal*. None of the Lombard rulers —not even Alboin himself—can be accused of the ferocious brutality displayed by Theoderic and by Theodahad. The savage appearance of the original Lombards, their linen garments striped with variegated colours, their heads shaven behind, shaggy locks hanging over their faces, and long beards over their breasts, was viewed (says Gibbon) with curiosity and affright by their near descendants. In the summer palace of Theoderic at Monza, which Queen Theodelinda restored and adorned with frescos, were depicted these barbaric ancestors of the race; and they doubtless excited much wonder and repulsion long before the days of Paul the Deacon, who saw and described with some consternation the portraits of his forefathers. But beneath this savage exterior, and behind much savagery in war—such as forced even Narses to rid himself of their presence as allies—there was in their nature an element of kindliness, generosity, and chivalry which often, as Gibbon allows, 'surprised their captives and subjects.' These qualities are very apparent in the Lombard laws of Rotharis, as we shall see later, and are well intimated by the epitaph of a Lombard warrior given by Paul the Deacon:

Terribilis visu facies; sed mente benignus;
Longaque robusto pectore barba fuit.

The more humane, chivalrous, and sympathetic traits of the Lombard character, doubtless rendered possible that amalgamation with the conquered Italian race which was

found to be impossible in the case of the Goths.[1] The gradual fusion of the Lombard with the Italian race was very probably that from which originated in course of time the new Italian art which showed itself first in Lombard-Romanesque architecture and later in Tuscan sculpture and painting—although externally all three may have been modified by other influences. On the other hand, as has been already remarked, the Lombards by their partial conquest and by their want of organized government undoubtedly aggravated the disintegration of Italian nationality. Whether such disintegration was favourable to art is a question that is easier to ask than to answer, but that it deferred Italy's *risorgimento* for many centuries is incontestable.

It will be remembered that Alaric's successor, the Visigoth Athaulf, renounced his design of founding a Gothic Empire because he had become convinced that the Goths were incapable of self-government and that the only possibility of securing order lay in their respect for the ancient Roman constitution. Also Theoderic and his daughter Amalasuntha, in spite of their intense desire to found an United Italy, had to convince themselves that Gothic influences were too strong for them. The Lombards also failed, but for other reasons. They had not invaded Italy, as Theoderic had done, in the name of the Empire, nor had they his reverence for the Empire. How far they abolished Roman law and the Roman magistracies it is not easy to prove; but it is certain that they introduced to a large extent their own system of government. Now this government depended solely on laws handed down by oral tradition and far more suited to the conditions of their former wild nomad life than to the circumstances in which they now found themselves as a dominant race of

[1] The contrast with our English ancestors is not flattering. The Lombard and Frank, like the Achaean and the Norman, did *not* exterminate, but assimilated, the native language and art and religion; the English conquerors of Britain exterminated, as far as they could. The Franks and Lombards were Christians; the Angles were pagans and detested Christianity. 'The rage of the conquerors,' says Green, 'burnt fiercest against the clergy. Rivers and homesteads, the very days of the week, bore the names of the new gods who displaced Christ.' (But how about the Frankish Mardi, Mercredi, etc.?)

comparatively small numbers in a land that for many centuries had been the centre of European civilization. Moreover the controlling influence that the Lombard king exercised over his warriors was much weakened by the dispersion of his subjects over almost all Italy and by the creation of a large number of duchies, some of which, being at a great distance, soon became practically independent under the rule of princes who founded hereditary dynasties. Also, the king, though supreme in case of war, had no hereditary rights—a fact that caused much bloodshed and disturbance—and although his authority was represented at the ducal courts by officers (*gastaldi*) who were intended to control finances, exact war tribute, and supervise military matters, these were more and more thwarted by the dukes' private counsellors and provincial governors (*gasiadi* and *sculdasci*). Thus decentralization and disorganization prevented the Lombard kingdom from becoming one firmly consolidated, dominant state. But this very failure to impose domination led in time to fusion with the various Italian peoples, and, although it deferred the formation of an Italian nation, it doubtless was a blessing in disguise.

On the death of Autharis in 590 Theodelinda,[1] whose character and intellect had impressed the Lombard nobles, was requested by them to select one of the dukes as her royal consort. After taking *consilium cum prudentibus* (says Paul the Deacon) she chose Agilulf, a relation of Autharis and duke of Turin, who was crowned at Milan, in the church of S. Ambrogio. He and she reigned together for twenty-five years. This reign is interesting for several reasons. Agilulf is regarded by some writers, among whom is Ranke, as the first Lombard king who tried, doubtless with the advice of his wise queen, to introduce a more stable and centralized form of government. Again, for the student of the origins of Italian art, especially of Romanesque architecture, this period

[1] Her Bavarian name was probably Theudelinde. *Cf.* Theuderic, etc., p. 159 *n.* The English form should perhaps be Theudelind, like Rosalind. Theodelinda, or Theodolinda, is the Roman (Latin) form, Teodolinda the Italian.

offers some seductive and not fully explored vistas. Then Gregory the Great is an impressive personality, and his relations to the Lombard king and queen and to other notabilities, as well as his connexion with England, make the subject still more interesting. I shall therefore leave it to be treated more fully in a later chapter, and shall go rapidly onwards with the narrative of events.

Agilulf found himself faced by three formidable enemies—the Franks, the Byzantines, and the Romans—who, had they acted in concert, might have easily overpowered him. Fortunately for the Lombards, the Franks were still occupied by intestine discords, for their kingdom, which consisted of two antagonistic realms (Neustria and Austrasia) inhabited by the very diverse races of the Salic and the Ripuarian Franks, had been subdivided between several rival heirs at the death of Clothar (558) and again at the death of Childebert in 596. The second opponent of Agilulf, the Byzantine power, was hampered by the hate of the Italian people, and was also at this time, as so often before, occupied by troubles in the far East, where the powerful dynasty of the Persian Sassanidae had for nearly four centuries defied the Empire—and continued to do so until Persia was conquered by the Mohammedans in 651. The third adversary was the 'duchy' of Rome, still nominally under a Byzantine governor, but really to a great extent independent of the Ravenna Exarch[1] and in voluntary submission to the authority of the Pope, whose authority, both civil and spiritual, was exerted strongly against the Lombards as aliens and as Arians. But Agilulf, again doubtless guided by the counsels of his wife, found means to appease the Franks—who gave no more trouble for some time—and to hold his own against the Byzantines, while Theodelinda herself, as we shall see, at last succeeded in gaining the affectionate friendship of her husband's most strenuous adversary, Pope Gregory, who was charmed by the prospect

[1] Rome had still a Byzantine Governor and Commandant (*Dux* and *Magister militum*) who were nominally under the Ravenna Exarch, but during the seventh century assumed more and more independence, till Rome became the first Italian republic, except Venice.

of converting the heretical Lombards to Catholicism through her influence.

However, before all this took place Agilulf had some years of hard fighting. First he was obliged to chastise the insubordinate dukes of Orta, Treviso, and Bergamo. The last of these, Gaidulf, had fortified himself in the Isola Comacina, the stronghold in the Lake of Como which, as we have seen, had been taken a few years before by Autharis from the Byzantines. Agilulf, having captured the island, where he is said to have found considerable treasure, chased Gaidulf to Bergamo and made him prisoner, but wisely spared his life, thus gaining his friendship. He then began to think of subduing the too independent duchy of Benevento. Now the southern Lombard duchies of Benevento and Spoleto had proved not only rebels against their king, but also so threatening to Rome that Gregory, who (to use his own words) 'scarcely knew any longer whether he was a pastor or a temporal prince,' after many vain appeals to Ravenna, signed a treaty with the *gens nefandissima Longobardorum*, as he used to call them.

Hereupon Agilulf, in the spring of 593, marched south, determined to attack Rome. Here there was such consternation that Gregory broke off his public homilies on Ezekiel and girded on his sword. However, whether the Romans, inspired by the martial ardour of their Pope, offered too vigorous a resistance, or whether the malarial fever of the Campagna proved too deadly, Agilulf, after devastating the country, retired northwards, and for the next few years Italy had peace from Lombards and also from Byzantines, for in the East serious disorders were being caused by the threatening attitude of the Avars and by the murder of the Emperor Maurice by the usurper Phocas, of whom we shall hear more ere long.

During the later years of Pope Gregory's life a very friendly feeling grew up between him and the Lombard king, mainly by means of Theodelinda, who as a Bavarian princess had been brought up in Catholicism, and who, like our Queen Bertha, exercised a strong religious influence on her husband.

Whether Agilulf actually renounced Arianism is uncertain, but he allowed his infant son Adelwald to be baptized (603) as Catholic, as we learn from Gregory's correspondence with the queen on the subject of his little godson. This doubtless favoured strongly the popularity of Catholicism among the Lombards. It was however some time before they renounced entirely their heretical form of Christianity.

Since 600 Gregory had been much tormented by gout, and in 604 the disease put an end to his life.

It seems that the popularity won by Agilulf and by Theodelinda through their strong and wise government, and their encouragement of civilized arts and manners, allowed them to assume the privilege of hereditary sovereignty, for in this same year (604) their son, scarce two years old, was proclaimed heir to the throne. This took place at Milan, in the presence of the envoy of Theudebert II, the king of the Franks, whose infant daughter was at the same time formally betrothed to the little Adelwald. After this event we hear but little of Agilulf's reign, and, except that the north-eastern Lombard territory, especially the duchy of Fruili (Cividale), for a time was invaded by great hordes of the Avars, the Tartar race of whom we have already heard several times,[1] the last ten years of his life seem to have passed quietly, formal peace existing between the Lombards and the Exarchate; and during this period, and still more during the next ten years, Theodelinda was doubtless occupied in building some of her many churches and towers, in decorating her palace, in entertaining artists and Catholic prelates and missionaries and other men of note.[2]

On Agilulf's death his son Adelwald, now a boy of twelve, an ardent Catholic, succeeded him under the regency of his mother. Of the events of his reign (615–25) we know very little. Finally Arian nobles fomented a rebellion which

[1] See p. 103 *n.* They were vanquished by Heraclius, who was Eastern Emperor (610–41) after Phocas. The remnants of the race settled in the Salzburg country and were annexed to the Frank Empire by Charles the Great in 791.

[2] See ch. ii of this Part. Her cathedral at Monza was probably begun soon after her marriage with Agilulf (590), and her Monza palace about 595–600.

compelled him to flee for refuge to Ravenna, and Ariwald, an Arian, was set on the throne. Theodelinda possibly joined her son for a time, but she seems to have returned and to have lived as a guest at the Lombard court, where she was held in honour; for the new king married her daughter Gundeberga. She died in 628, at Perledo. Ariwald died in 636, and Gundeberga was requested, as her mother had been, to choose another husband as her royal consort. She chose Rotharis (Rotheric, Roderic, or Rotari), duke of Brescia—a choice that for the general weal seems to have proved more successful than for her personal happiness, seeing that, like her late husband, her new lord was Arian, and was so much less tolerant of her Catholic propensities that he imprisoned her closely, it is said, for five years in his palace at Pavia, whence she was released on the intercession of Clovis (Chlodwig II), the Frank king. She gave up the rest of her life to good works, and followed Theodelinda's example by rebuilding the basilica of S. Giovanni [1] in Pavia, in which she buried her two husbands.

Rotharis reigned sixteen years (636–52). He is specially celebrated as the great Lombard legislator, but in the first half-dozen years of his reign he also distinguished himself by extending the Lombard dominion from the region of Luna (Spezia and La Lunigiana) over Liguria and up to the Frank frontier near Marseille, capturing Genoa from the Byzantines as well as smaller maritime towns such as Levanto and Sestri. In 642 he also, says Paul the Deacon, inflicted a great defeat with a loss of 8000 men on the Roman and Ravennate forces near the river Panaro. Doubtless his boldness and his success were both considerably due to the following events, which prevented the Eastern Emperor, Heraclius, from paying much attention to Italy.

In the earlier years of his reign Heraclius had been so alarmed by the audacity of the Persians, who in 615 had captured Jerusalem (whence they carried off the Cross—what was left of

[1] Built first probably when Theoderic had his palace there (*c.* 500); demolished in 1811. A few relics exist in Milan and elsewhere. The sculptured marbles were used for building the canal between Pavia and Milan!

it!) and had even made alliance with the Avars of Hungary and threatened Constantinople itself, that, it is said, he thought of removing the capital of the Empire to Carthage. But he seems to have suddenly developed courage and vigour, and finally succeeded in crushing both the Avars and also the Persians and recovering from them all the captives as well as the captured Cross, which he carried in triumph to Constantinople and then took back to Jerusalem.

This happened in 628–29, exactly at the same time that a new and formidable power first began to arise in the East; for in 629, seven years after the *Hegira* (Flight), Mecca was taken and the Holy War was declared by the great Arab prophet. Mohammed himself headed his armies in this Holy War for only four years. He died in 632; but his Caliphs extended their conquests so rapidly that between 634 and 640 Damascus, Antioch, Jerusalem, Mesopotamia, and Egypt had fallen, and the Saracens,[1] as the Moslems were called by the Greeks and Latins, were soon afterwards threatening Europe.

This new danger that had so suddenly gathered not only in the east but in the south compelled Heraclius to think of some means of defence—for it was no longer possible to escape by transferring the seat of Empire to Africa. Closer political union of all parts of the Empire seemed his one hope, and he felt, as other Emperors had already felt, that the only chance of attaining political unity was through religious uniformity; and possibly the successful hierarchy of the Moslem caliphs may have confirmed his belief in the βασιλεὺς καὶ ἱερεὺς (king and priest) doctrine of the Eastern Emperors.[2] He attempted therefore to conciliate the Catholics and the heretical sects in the East (who were more inclined to make common cause with Islam than to accept the Trinity and the 'double nature' of Christ), but his 'Exposition of Faith' (*Ecthesis*) was repudiated with scorn in Italy, and, like Zeno and Justinian and many others, he found that any endeavour to reconcile sects and

[1] Said to be the Arabic *Sharki-in, i.e.* 'Orientals'—or, according to others, 'Thieves.' The word was, however, probably not Arabic, but a name given to Arabs by foreigners.

[2] Compare Louis XIV's *L'état et l'église, c'est moi.*

bring about doctrinal uniformity was likely to make things worse instead of better. Hereupon he seems to have fallen into a state of nervous despondency, and in 641 he died. Meantime in Italy the Lombard king had been extending and consolidating his power, and had drawn up his celebrated Code of laws.

Rotharis' Code, or Edict, was sanctioned in a great assembly held at Pavia in 643. Autharis had governed by means of oral Lombard laws, but this is a written barbarian code—the first that was published in Italy. It is in a kind of barbarous Latin and consists of 388 chapters, or paragraphs.[1] In the Prologue, which is most valuable historically, as it gives the names and relations of the Lombard kings up to about 640, Rotharis tells us that his purpose was to collect and emend all the ancient laws of his race, and to erase the superfluous (*d'entro delle leggi trasse il troppo e vano*, as Dante's Justinian says of himself). Although in parts evidently inspired by Roman law, it is on the whole Lombardic in spirit and in form; but it gives some very striking proofs of recent enlightenment. Thus, the old *faida*, or vendetta, and the duel (as test of guilt) are abolished, as also is the burning of witches. Capital punishment is rarely imposed, and legal fines take the place of private vengeance—a civilized ordinance even beyond the cognition of Roman law. The general tenor of the laws is directed against the great landowners (as was also the case under the Gothic domination) and is in favour of the poor and of the working man. In this respect Rotharis' legislation compares very favourably with that of the contemporary Byzantine Code, which connived at, when it did not openly abet, *latifundia* and official extortion.

After the death of Rotharis in 652 followed an obscure and externally uninteresting period of sixty years, which may be dismissed briefly. His son and successor Rodwald is killed after a short reign. Then Aribert, a nephew of Theodelinda, is king for eight years and leaves the kingdom divided between

[1] Others were added by Grimwald, and 153 more by Liutprand. Astulf also made a few laws.

his two sons, Bertharis and Godebert, whose capitals are respectively Milan and Pavia. The brothers quarrel and the younger appeals for help to the powerful duke of Benevento, Grimwald, who comes to Pavia, but, instead of aiding Godebert, kills him. Bertharis hereupon flees for refuge to the Avars, and Grimwald is crowned in Pavia (662), thus for the first and last time uniting under a Lombard king the northern dominions with the hitherto almost independent duchy in the far south.[1]

But this southern duchy of Benevento, which he had left in charge of his son Romwald, was just at this moment dangerously threatened by the Byzantines; and to understand how this came about we must turn for a moment from Lombard Italy to Rome.[2] Here the everlasting squabbles over doctrinal subtleties had reached such a climax that the Eastern Emperor, Constans II (642–68), at last ordered the Exarch to send Pope Martin to Constantinople, as he had refused to acquiesce in an imperial edict commanding the cessation of all discussion about the 'double nature' of Christ and had even summoned a Council which denounced the edict as *sceleratissimum*. Pope Martin was shamefully treated by Constans and finally deported to the Crimea, where he died, it is said, of hunger. His successors, however, seem to have come to an understanding with the Emperor, who was beginning to be much alarmed by the Saracens. The infidels had routed his fleet off the coast of Asia Minor and were now devastating Sicily. An army was therefore raised for the defence of that island, and in 662—the year in which Grimwald left Benevento for Pavia—Constans set out from Constantinople at the head of his forces, and, probably thinking that it was a good opportunity for surprising

[1] The fact that he married the sister of the murdered Godebert is so often paralleled in these ages that it scarcely causes wonder.

[2] The history of Italy both in this age and in other ages is often viewed too much from the standpoint of a dominant power—barbarian, Byzantine, Papal, Norman, German, French, Spanish, etc. This is due to the fact that we have very few records of anything but such dominant powers until the rise of the Republics. The story of Rome in the Middle Ages is told attractively by Gregorovius, but at times it is a rather wearisome account of endless Popes and endless local squabbles, political and religious, relieved only by interesting antiquarian details.

the Lombards of South Italy, landed at Otranto and besieged Grimwald's son in Benevento But Grimwald marched rapidly to his relief and routed the 20,000 Byzantines and Romans. He thus saved his southern dominions; and had he made a determined effort he might perhaps have seized Naples, and even Rome, and thus changed the whole course of Italian history.[1]

Soon afterwards Grimwald dies and the fugitive Bertharis returns and is acclaimed as king. Of his reign of seventeen years (671–88) we know very little. His son Cunibert is excluded from the throne for a time by an usurper, but defeats and slays him in a great battle on the Adda, and reigns for twelve years (688–700). When Cunibert dies his son succeeds, for hereditary rights seem now to be recognized—but, being a minor, he is placed under the regency of a noble named Ansprand. Soon another claimant arises, Ragimbert by name, who sets his own son, Aribert II, on the throne.

Now Ansprand had fled to Bavaria—the home of Theodelinda. Hearing that he is plotting to return, the usurper Aribert seizes his wife and children (all but one, Liutprand, who escapes and joins his father) and mutilates them with the most inhuman cruelty, tearing out their eyes and tongues. But the day of vengeance at last arrived. Ansprand, descending from the Alps with an army of Bavarians, was joined by many who hated the bloodthirsty and pious tyrant.[2] Aribert endeavoured to flee from Pavia, but was drowned, it is said, while attempting to swim across the Ticino with a heavy bag

[1] Constans retired to Rome, where he, a fratricide and Pope-murderer, combined piety with robbery by bestowing large donatives on churches and carrying off the gilded covering of the dome of the Pantheon—which building, by the way, had been given by the monster Phocas to Gregory the Great to be converted into a church. Constans then went to Sicily, and during five years emulated Verres, till a slave smote him on the head with a pot of hot water and drowned him in his bath.

[2] Writers such as Villari and Cappelletti dwell on the great advance in civilization observable in connexion with the conversion of the Lombards to Catholicism at this period. Doubtless many churches were built. This monster, Aribert II, was (says Villari) a great favourite of the Catholic clergy and of several Popes, and this may have favoured the fusion of Lombards and Italians.

of money. Hereupon Ansprand is proclaimed king; but he dies in the same year (712), leaving as heir his son Liutprand, who as a boy had escaped to Bavaria some ten years before. The long reign of Liutprand (712–44) was perhaps more notable than that of any other Lombard king—partly on account of incidents which were not directly connected with the Lombard court, but which were momentous for Italy.

These incidents, which deeply affected the relations of the Eastern Empire with what we may perhaps call Byzantine Italy, were, as might be expected, intimately connected with religious, or rather with ecclesiastical, questions. They must claim our attention for a few moments.

We have already seen one Emperor after another setting himself up as a kind of Antipope, convening Councils, promulgating not only conciliatory *Henotika* and *Ectheses*, but even inflammatory definitions of the Trinity and the Nature of Christ; we have seem them deposing, imprisoning, and otherwise treating with contumely and cruelty the supreme Roman pontiffs. We now come to a hostility so violent that it necessarily ended in total rupture between the East and West. The Popes, zealously supported by the Italians, became more and more able to defy the pretensions of the Emperors, and their defiance embittered the relations between the Byzantine court and its Italian provinces. In 691 the Emperor Justinian II ordered a Church Council to meet in his palace. Pope Sergius refused to subscribe to the decisions of this Council. The Emperor thereupon sent Zacharias, his Protospathar (captain of the imperial swordsmen), to Rome to imprison the Pope; but the Ravenna troops revolted and marched to Rome, and the Romans rose in their Pope's defence, and the Protospathar had to save his life by hiding, it is said, in the Pope's bedchamber, and even under the papal bedstead, until the popular fury had so far abated as to allow him to leave the city. Justinian some years later revenged himself for this insult by a savage assault on Ravenna. The city was sacked, and the archbishop blinded [1] and exiled to the Crimea.

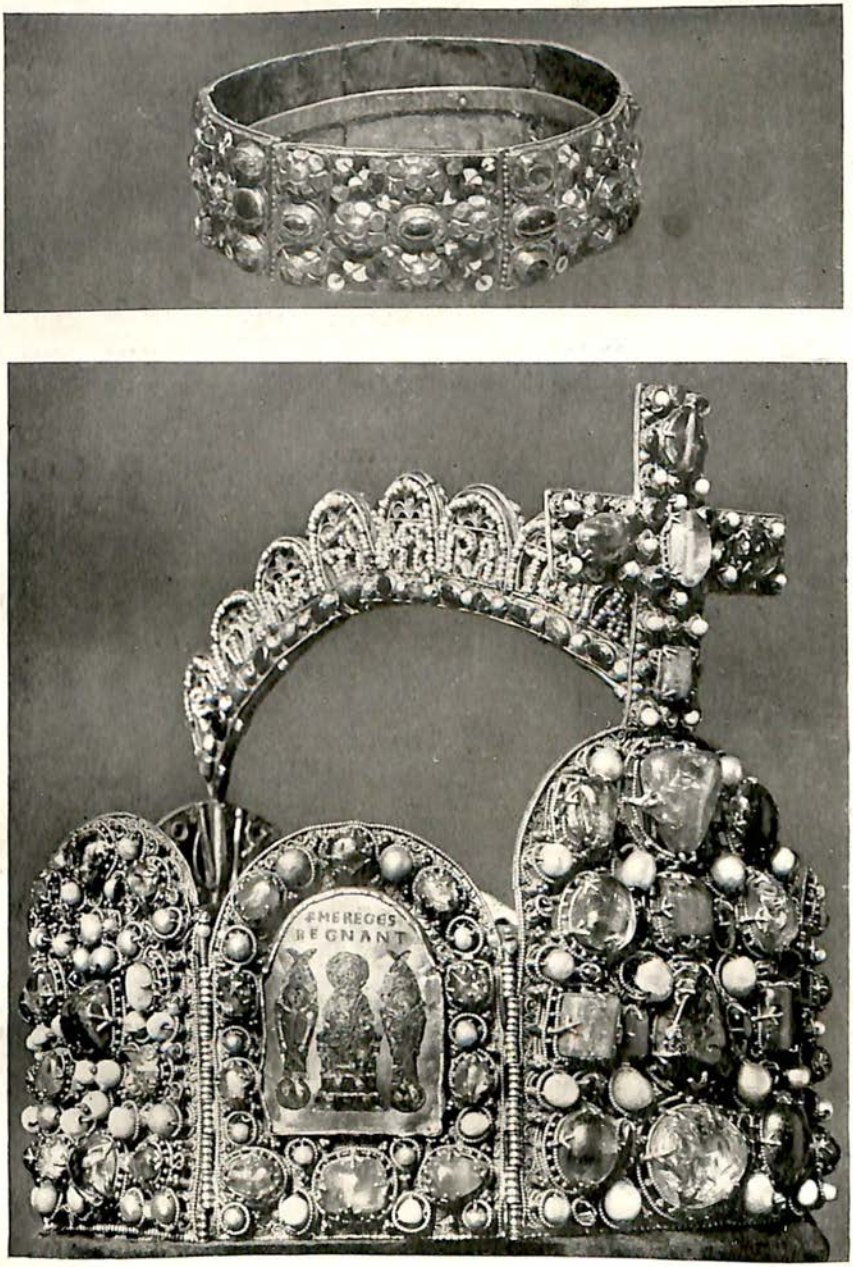
[1] I.e. *abbacinato*: for which see p. 16.

But indignation and rebellion spread, and in spite of a temporary reconciliation between the Emperor and the Pope (now Constantine I) and a festal meeting of the two in Asia Minor, serious tumults occurred at Rome, where the Exarch himself was killed; and most of the cities of the Exarchate made common cause with Ravenna [1] in a revolt against the Eastern Empire—the first confederation of cities in the history of medieval Italy. Justinian had already been driven from his throne for several years (695–705), and his cruelties now caused another revolution to break out. He was killed (711) by the usurper Bardanes, or Philippicus, who endeavoured to conciliate Ravenna and the Romans by sending back the blinded archbishop, and also by sending over to Italy Justinian's head, which, we are told, 'all flocked with avidity to gaze upon.' But the favour courted by these methods was short-lived. Heretical tendencies and the assumption of pontifical functions once more roused the most violent hostility at Rome. The portrait of Philippicus was banned from St. Peter's and other churches; his name was no longer to be heard in the Mass; money with his image and superscription was refused. So intense became the excitement that within the space of a few years Philippicus was deposed and blinded, and his two successors were deposed and forced to receive the tonsure. Then (in 717) the throne was ascended by Leo III, a valiant soldier of Eastern birth, well known on account of his origin as Leo the Isaurian, and known still better as Leo the Iconoclast.

The next scene of our drama is filled mainly by Liutprand, the Emperor Leo, and (down to the year 731) Pope Gregory the Second, the vigorous opponent of the iconoclastic Emperor. The chief events are the political and ecclesiastical rupture between East and West and the consequent increase of Lombard power, which induces the Popes to call in the Franks.[2]

[1] At Ravenna the rebellion was led by a certain George, son of the distinguished and learned Ravennate 'Little John,' who had been crucified by the Byzantines. George reconstituted the army and inspired the people by his eloquence, like Rienzi at Rome in later days.

[2] A curious fact is that during the whole of the period 727–74 the received dates are apparently one year in advance of what they should be. See Bury's



19. The Iron Crown and the so-called Crown of Charlemagne

See List of Illustrations

First, then, a few words about the long and bitter strife concerning what we will call the *use* of icons—that is, of religious images, whether pictures or statues; for how far one should speak here of the *abuse* of such things, and whether in this case one would be justified in using the word *idolatry* as it was used by iconoclasts, need not now be discussed. Suffice it to say that many in the Eastern Church, doubtless influenced by the very strong feeling among Eastern monotheists, such as the Jews and the Moslems, concerning the dangerous proclivity of human nature towards idolatry, without being actuated by ultra-puritanical motives, were unable to understand the attitude of the Roman Church (an attitude mainly due to the hereditary influences of classical paganism) in regard to the use of images for religious purposes.

The Emperor Leo felt strongly on the subject,[1] and in 628, after having spent the first nine years of his reign in valorously repelling Saracens who threatened Constantinople and in successful campaigns against them in Sicily, he took—for good or for evil—the momentous decision to adventure the Herculean labour of cleansing the house of God from 'idolatry'—for it was against the fetish-worship of pictures and statues, not against such things regarded as works of art, that he was determined to declare war. He began by publishing his celebrated Edict, ordering all religious images to be destroyed or removed from churches.[2] The Edict was all the more intensely obnoxious to the Catholic ecclesiastics because behind this denunciation of images was known to exist an

Later Roman Empire, ii, 425. In this connexion I might note here that until the middle of the sixth century dates were often reckoned by the Roman consulships, and that from 312 onward there was a cumbrous and perplexing system of reckoning by *Interdictions*—periods of fifteen years during which the *census* of property and the assessment of taxes remained unaltered.

[1] As a native of Isauria, or perhaps of some region of Armenia, Leo had been doubtless influenced by the Iranian (Persian, Zoroastrian) religion, which rejected statues and temples. He was accused by the Romans of being 'Saracenized.' The contempt of the Moslems for the miracle-working idols of the Christians was very bitter.

[2] The Vatican St. Peter, possibly once a statue of Jupiter (see p. 104), was the object of special denunciation by Leo and veneration by the Romans, as we see from Gregory's letters to the Emperor.

abhorrence of Mariolatry and of the gross and useful superstitions connected with relics—to say nothing of monasticism and enforced celibacy.

In Constantinople itself and other parts of the Empire great opposition was excited by the Edict; but here it was suppressed by force, whereas in Italy the result was a sudden and violent explosion that shattered the Byzantine power. Ravenna, Venice, and other cities of the northern Exarchate, as well as Rome and Naples, rose against their foreign governors and elected their own *duces*; and thenceforward only in the extreme south of the peninsula a few towns and regions continued to acknowledge the Eastern Emperor and the Eastern Patriarch—a state of things that lasted till the coming of the Normans.

The further fortunes of this controversy about images have an ecclesiastical rather than a historical interest and we may dismiss them with a few remarks. After the death of Pope Gregory II in 731 his successor, Gregory III, was at first in favour of Leo; but his Council took a very different view and declared excommunicated all who were not in favour of images. In 754 a Council of 338 bishops met at Constantinople and declared unanimously against images. This war to the knife continued for many years. The pious Irene, who deposed and blinded her own son, has the glory of having reintroduced the use of images in the Eastern Church, for a Council [1] summoned by her at Nicaea in 787 unanimously decreed that 'the cult of images is agreeable to the Scriptures, the Fathers, and the Councils of the Church,' and that 'prayer should be offered to the images of the Saints as to the Cross' (Villari).

We will now return to Liutprand. His reign of thirty-two years, notable as the period of final revolt against imperial rule in Italy, was also notable because, while Popes and Emperors, Romans and Byzantines, were exhausting themselves in religious and political strife, the Lombard king was quickly

[1] Accepted by the Roman Catholic Church. Irene, says Gibbon, has on this account 'received the honour of Saint [!] in the Greek Calendar.' But another woman, Theodora (*c.* 840), has the credit of achieving the final victory of iconolatry in the Eastern Church.

extending and consolidating his dominions by conquest and by wise legislation and was favouring the development of a new and beautiful architecture by patronizing the guilds of the 'Comacine' master-builders, who erected for him many churches—such as the exquisite basilica of S. Pietro at Tuscania (Toscanella), near Viterbo, the Duomo and Baptistery of Novara, possibly S. Salvatore at Brescia, and several churches at Genoa and at Pavia, especially the celebrated Ciel d'oro, where he deposited the bones of St. Augustine, which he had ransomed from the Saracens of Sardinia.

The legislation of Liutprand added 153 laws to the Code of Rotharis. These laws are remarkable for their qualities of mercy and Christian charity. They show a deep aversion for old barbaric customs of appeal to duel or the 'judgment of God'; they give legal rights to women and defend the poor against oppression.

Liutprand's earlier conquests had extended the Lombard kingdom southwards[1] and also over most of Emilia and Pentapolis, and about 730 he seems to have succeeded in capturing Ravenna; for in 734 we find Pope Gregory III writing to Orso, third Doge of Venice, begging him to recover Ravenna 'for the Empire'; and this was done—a fact that proves how powerful and independent Venice had already become. It also shows how anxious Pope Gregory was becoming about the rapid increase of the Lombard power. So anxious indeed he became that a few years later (739) he tried to foment, or aid, a rebellion of the southern Lombard duchies of Spoleto and Benevento. Hereupon King Liutprand marched southwards once more, and, after defeating Thrasamund, the rebel duke of Spoleto, who fled for refuge to the Pope, he advanced against Rome.

It was at this crisis, when Liutprand was capturing the strongholds and devastating the country of the Roman duchy

[1] On this occasion he captured Sutri, in the duchy of Rome and only thirty miles distant from the capital. This town he, however, restored, and, being a zealous Catholic, he restored it, *not* to the Romans, but to 'St. Peter'—a fact that may be regarded as the first germ of the temporal power of the Popes (the *Donation of Constantine* being legendary).

right up to the basilica of St. Peter (then outside the walls), that Gregory wrote the famous letter with which the still more famous Vienna manuscript, the Codex Carolinus,[1] begins—the first extant letter addressed by him to 'Dom^no excellentissimo filio Carolo subregulo,' namely to Charles Martel, the conqueror of the Saxons, Frisians, and Bavarians—the saviour of Christian Europe by his ever-memorable victory over the Moors and Arabs at Poitiers—the monarch of all the Franks, though still nominally only Duke of Austrasia and 'Master of the Palace' in Neustria.

This letter of Gregory III was inopportune, for Charles had just applied to Liutprand for assistance against the Arabs, and Liutprand had actually gone north to help him; but, finding that the war against the infidels was finished, he returned and again began devastating the possessions of the Church in the Roman duchy. Gregory then wrote another and still more urgent letter to Charles, begging his aid *contra nefandissimos Longobardos*, and reminding him that he had sent him, among other splendid gifts, golden keys of the tomb of St. Peter *cum vinculis* (*i.e.* containing filings from the chains of the Apostle). These keys were doubtless meant to indicate to Charles that he was expected to come forward as the defender of St. Peter's tomb; and one chronicler—a somewhat untrustworthy one—asserts that Gregory made a distinct promise 'to withdraw from the side of the Emperor' (*a partibus Imperatoris recedere*) and recognize Charles as Roman Consul. It appears somewhat strange that the Pope should admit as still existing even the shadow of an alliance with the Byzantine court, for there seems to have existed at Rome no longer any official recognition of Byzantine sovranty. But the narrative may contain some truth; Gregory may have forestalled to some extent the invitation sent by Pope Leo III to Charles the Great.

Gregory received no answer to his appeal, for in November of this year (741) he suddenly died, and Charles had already

[1] A collection of ninety-nine papal letters, etc., made by order of Charles the Great.

died, a month earlier. The Emperor Leo also died in the same year. Liutprand was thus the only one left of the four conspicuous characters of this period, and he survived them only three years. But these three years added not a little to his power and renown. The new Pope, Zacharias—whose consecration, without imperial sanction, is a striking evidence of newly acquired independence—adopted a conciliatory attitude towards the Lombard king, and a solemn meeting took place in the basilica of St. Peter [1] at Viterbo, near the frontier between Lombard Tuscany and the Roman duchy. Here a truce of twenty years was signed. Liutprand also made a treaty with Stephanus, the Duke, or Patrician, of Rome, who was now practically the president of the Roman Commune. He also confirmed his sovran rights over the hitherto insubordinate southern duchies by deposing Thrasamund (who had to receive the tonsure—the not unmerciful lot of many a fallen potentate in those ages) and by placing new rulers on the ducal thrones of Spoleto and Benevento. Perhaps it is, as it seems to some writers, a pity that Liutprand did not now take advantage of his position and attempt to found his kingdom on the basis of an united Italy—even if the union of its rather heterogeneous elements had to be effected in the first instance by external force. However that may be, the attempt was not made—possibly because the genius for empire-building was wanting in the Lombard character; possibly also Liutprand's reverence, as loyal Catholic, for the spiritual authority and the temporal possessions of the Church made him hesitate. How strongly he was influenced by such reverence is proved by the fact that after the treaty of Viterbo he restored many of the towns and strongholds claimed by the Pope, as heir to the Byzantine possessions, both in the northern Exarchate and in the Roman duchy, and that two years before his death he abandoned—at the entreaty of the Pope—his design of seizing Ravenna.

[1] So Villari. Rivoira, however, in his *Origini della arch. lomb.* mentions S. Lorenzo (the vanished original of the present *duomo*) as the only known ancient church of Viterbo, and that was probably built, as were the still existing Lombard ramparts, some twenty years later, by Desiderius.

In 744 Liutprand died, leaving his throne to his son, or nephew, Hildebrand, who was soon deposed by Ratchis. Of Ratchis' reign we know scarcely anything, except that it ended by his retiring to Monte Cassino. His brother and successor Astulf (749–56), by his ferociously aggressive anti-papal policy, brought about the first serious invasion of the Franks. In 752 he took Ravenna—an act that is regarded as finally extinguishing the Byzantine Exarchate—and, in spite of a forty years' peace that he had signed, he obstinately refused to give up Roman and papal towns and territories [1] that he had seized, and *fremens ut leo*, as the old chronicler says, he so terrified the Romans with his threats that Pope Stephen, barefoot and bestrewn with ashes, led suppliant processions to the three great churches of Rome, bearing aloft on a cross the violated treaty of peace. At last, in despair the Pope paid a visit (in 573) to the Lombard king at Pavia. But all was in vain; so he continued his journey and crossed the Alps in order to appeal in person to Pipin, king of the Franks.

Pipin the Short (*Pépin le Bref*) and his brother Carlmann had for a time held the supreme power after the death of their father, Charles Martel, but were nominally only *maires du palais* of the last puppet-king of the Merovingian dynasty, the *roi fainéant* Childeric III. Carlmann, tired of a worldly life, had in 746 retired to a monastery founded by himself on Mount Soracte, near Rome, and thence to the Benedictine convent of Monte Cassino. Left as sole ruler of the Franks, Pipin had appealed to the Pope (then Zacharias) to decide whether a *roi fainéant* or he who really held and exercised the kingly authority ought to bear the regal title. To this Zacharias gave the answer desired, and delegated Boniface, the English Apostle of Germany and at this time Archbishop of Mainz, to crown Pipin at the solemn conclave of Soissons in 751.

Now when two years later the successor of Pope Zacharias,

[1] In letters of Pope Stephen II to Astulf he talks of restitution 'to Rome' and 'to the Republic,' but he soon slides into such expressions as 'to St. Peter' and 'to the Holy Church.' For explanation of the confusion made by writers between Stephen II and Stephen III, see List of Popes, p. 249.

Stephen II, crossed the Alps, as I have said, to appeal to King Pipin, he was met on his journey by the young prince Charles (afterwards Charles the Great), who accompanied him till the king himself came forth on horseback to receive his guest. Straightway, it is said, even before they had reached the palace, Pipin gave his promise on oath that he would 'restore the Exarchate and all other places and rights belonging to the Republic of Rome'—or, in other words, to the Papal State. He then insists that Stephen shall pass the winter months at the Abbey of St. Dionysius (St.-Denis); he writes urgent and threatening letters, all in vain, to the Lombard Astulf; he renews his promise to the Pope in solemn assemblies; and Pope Stephen, in return, crowns in the church of St.-Denis not only Pipin himself, but his consort Bertharid (*Berthe au grand pied*) and their two sons, Charles and Carlmann—an act that is regarded as the papal and Roman sanction of Pipin's dynasty, seeing that he himself had already been crowned king of the Franks by St. Boniface. Indeed, it nearly amounted to a revival of the Roman Empire—a feat reserved for Pope Leo—for at the coronation Stephen, as the representative of Rome, and as himself vested with almost imperial authority, conferred on the Frankish monarch the supreme title of Patrician, which had been bestowed by Emperors only on eminent members of the imperial house, or had been borne by such rulers as Odovacar and Theoderic.

Pipin fulfilled his promise. Soon after his second coronation, at the head of a large army and accompanied by the Pope and a great cavalcade of prelates, he marched over Mont Cenis, drove Astulf back into Pavia, and forced him to promise the restitution of Ravenna and other cities of the former Exarchate, expressly stipulating that they should be restored, not to the Eastern Emperor, but to St. Peter—that is, to the Pope. But no sooner had Pipin withdrawn from Italy than Astulf, as was his custom, refused to keep his word. He marched south, devastated the Roman and papal territories, and threatened to sack Rome if the Pope were not surrendered to him. Pope Stephen, in his dire distress, sends Pipin a

letter, not from himself, but from no one less than St. Peter, who states that the Virgin Mother of God and the Thrones and Dominations and all the host of heaven and all the company of saints and martyrs join him in his appeal, and that if Pipin gives no attention to it he, Peter, by the authority of the Trinity and of his Holy Office, excludes him, Pipin, from the kingdom of God and from the life eternal. So once more King Pipin crosses Mont Cenis, once more captures Pavia (756), and forces Astulf, who had hastily abandoned his siege of Rome, to renounce his conquests in the Exarchate and the Pentapolis; and he then sends the keys of all these cities to the Pope.[1]

In this same year Astulf died. His brother Ratchis, who, it will be remembered, had abdicated and retired to Monte Cassino, now came forward, hoping to be re-elected king; but the Pope persuaded him to return to his monastery and favoured the election of Desiderius, Duke of Tuscany, who was lavish in his promises to support the Papacy in its demand for all the original territory of the Exarchate and Pentapolis —promises which, as usual, remained unfulfilled; for the new Lombard king renounced nothing except Faenza and Ferrara.

But the land-hunger of the Holy See was not to be sated by such a sop. Stephen's brother, Paul, had succeeded him as Pope, and the ever-increasing papal claims to vast territories (for the claims of 'St. Peter' had now totally eclipsed those of the 'Holy Roman Republic') were beginning to excite much hostility among the Roman nobility—a fact to be noted, seeing that, far more than any squabble between Pope and Eastern Emperor, this was the real beginning of the Guelf and Ghibelline feud.[2]

[1] The cities included Ravenna, Ancona, Bologna, Faenza, Ferrara, etc. Pipin's Donation was made 'to Saint Peter, to the Holy Roman Republic, and to all succeeding Pontiffs.' In answer to envoys from Constantinople he asserted that he had come to Italy solely 'for the love of St. Peter and for the pardon of his sins.' The document of Pipin's Donation was kept in the 'Confession' (see Index) of St. Peter's at Rome, and still existed when the writer of Pope Stephen's Life in the *Liber Pontificalis* was alive (*c.* 850–900 ?).

[2] In its first phase we have the Papacy supported against the Roman nobility by barbarian monarchs and revived Emperors, who encourage by

During the next twelve years we have constant negotiation and temporary combinations—much rocking of the balance, but no permanent disturbance of equipoise. Treaties are proposed, made, and broken again and again by the five masters to whom Italy is enslaved, and things remain much as they were. In 767 Pope Paul dies, and in the following year King Pipin. He leaves the Frank kingdom to his two sons Charles and Carlmann, whose violent quarrels cause great disturbance and exacerbate existing feuds even in the cities of Italy. But after three years Carlmann dies, and his widow with her children finds a refuge at the court of Desiderius in Pavia. Charles thus becomes (in 771) the monarch of the Frank kingdom of Neustria and Austrasia and all its dependencies.

Before relating the events that led to the conquest of the Lombards by Charles, and to his coronation as Emperor, it may be well to glance at the state of things in Rome after the death of Pope Paul in 767—just in order to gain some conception of the almost incredible savagery with which the aristocratic and ecclesiastical factions carried on their feuds. Pope Paul was on his deathbed, but still alive, when the Duke of Nepi (a little town of the papal-Roman duchy) hastened to Rome with a strong force and set his brother Constantine on the papal throne. As Constantine was a layman, he had to be ordained cleric, sub-deacon, deacon, and priest, and then consecrated as bishop and Pope, all on the same day. A year later a priest, Philip by name, was put forward by the Lombard faction. He was consecrated in the Lateran and took his seat on the papal throne in St. Peter's, and gave his papal benediction to the congregation. But the next month (August 768) a third Pope, Stephen III, a friend of the late Pope Paul, was elected by a combination of clerics, army, and people. 'This new election,' says Villari, 'did not allay popular excitement, since before the new Pope was consecrated

Donations its ravening greed for temporal power. Dante uses bitter words about this she-wolf: 'Laden in her leanness with all ravenings . . . she never sates her craving hunger. . . .' 'Many are the animals with which she weds.' (*Inf.* i.) And still stronger is his Biblical *puttaneggiar co' regi* (*Inf.* xix). One of these *regi* was, of course, Charles of Anjou.

the victorious party decided to take vengeance on Constantine and his adherents. Some of these had eyes and tongue torn out. The infuriated mob then rushed to the house in which the ex-Pope was confined. They overwhelmed him with insults, set him on horseback on a woman's saddle and took him to a monastery. Hence he was conducted to the Lateran Basilica, where the assembled bishops formally deposed him, stripping off his pallium and his pontifical leggings. Shortly after this his enemies dragged him out of the monastery, dug out his eyes, and left him lying on the street almost dead.' A priest who had been a chief instigator of the election of Pope Philip, and who had sought sanctuary in the Pantheon (S. Maria ad Martyres), was torn away from the sacred image to which he was clinging, dragged to the Lateran, and in like fashion blinded—and died in consequence.

But we must return to Charles. Through the death of his brother he had become sole ruler of the Franks. Not long before this happened he had been persuaded by his mother Bertharid (Berthe) to ally himself with the Lombard king—one of those numerous alliances which, as I have remarked, characterized this period and kept the balance swinging. He was even persuaded to marry the Lombard princess Desiderata, daughter of Desiderius. When Pope Stephen III heard of this proposed marriage he was, not unnaturally, consternated. His letter on this occasion—inserted by Charles himself in his collection of papal letters and still to be seen at Vienna—is couched in violent language. He calls diabolic any union between the noble race of Franks and the most iniquitous Lombard race, and adds that he had laid his letter on the tomb of St. Peter and was now sending it with tears in his eyes. And yet—such were the vacillations of the balance—in the very same year (771) in which Charles became sole king (but before it happened, which was in December) Stephen had been holding solemn meetings in St. Peter's with Desiderius, who with a considerable bodyguard had come to Rome, nominally on a pilgrimage, but really in order to rescue the Pope from certain turbulent nobles and ecclesiastics—an object that was effected, the leaders

of the hostile faction being seized and blinded.[1] However, in a few months the wind again shifted, for when Stephen heard that Charles had broken with the Lombard king—had indeed insulted him mortally by sending Desiderata back to her home—he too broke with Desiderius and began to court the favour of the Frank monarch. But death put an end to his intrigues (February 772).

Between the accession of Charles as supreme monarch of the Franks and his coronation as Emperor just twenty-nine years elapsed. Of this period I shall give here a brief account, reserving some points of special interest, such as the question of the Donations, and some picturesque details connected with the Coronation, to be treated in a following chapter.

To Pope Stephen III succeeded Hadrian I, a man of strong character. His reign of twenty-three years was momentous. One of his first acts was to send envoys to protest against the conduct of Desiderius, who, enraged at the insults of Charles and doubtless incited by the widow of Carlmann, had seized Faenza and Ferrara and was threatening Ravenna. Hadrian's embassy failed, and soon afterwards the Lombard king reached Viterbo on his march towards Rome.

Then the Pope appealed urgently to Charles, and the Frank monarch hastened to the rescue. He made a descent on Italy with two armies. One, under the command of his uncle, a son of Charles Martel, crossed by the pass of Jupiter Poeninus —the Monte Giove, Mont Joux, or Great St. Bernard of to-day; the other he himself led over Mont Cenis; and a desperate battle was fought (about June 773) in the Alpine defiles, which had been strongly fortified by the Lombards. Desiderius was driven back to Pavia, where he was closely invested by one Frank army, while the other captured Turin, Milan, and other cities, including Verona.[2] After besieging Pavia

[1] Christophorus and Sergius. They had led the rioters who deposed Constantine and Philip and elected Stephen, and now they were endeavouring to dominate him.

[2] In Verona were the widow and children of Carlmann, as well as Adelchis, the son of Desiderius. The former were captured and sent to a monastery; the latter escaped to Constantinople.

vainly for six months, Charles determined to celebrate the Easter festival of 774 at Rome. This, the first of his visits to Rome, momentous on account of the confirmation of Pipin's Donation, will be described in a later chapter. In June he left Rome and returned to Pavia, which ere long surrendered.[1] Desiderius, together with his wife and daughter, was sent to France. Here he was compelled to become a monk, and died in obscurity. Thus ended the Lombard monarchy.

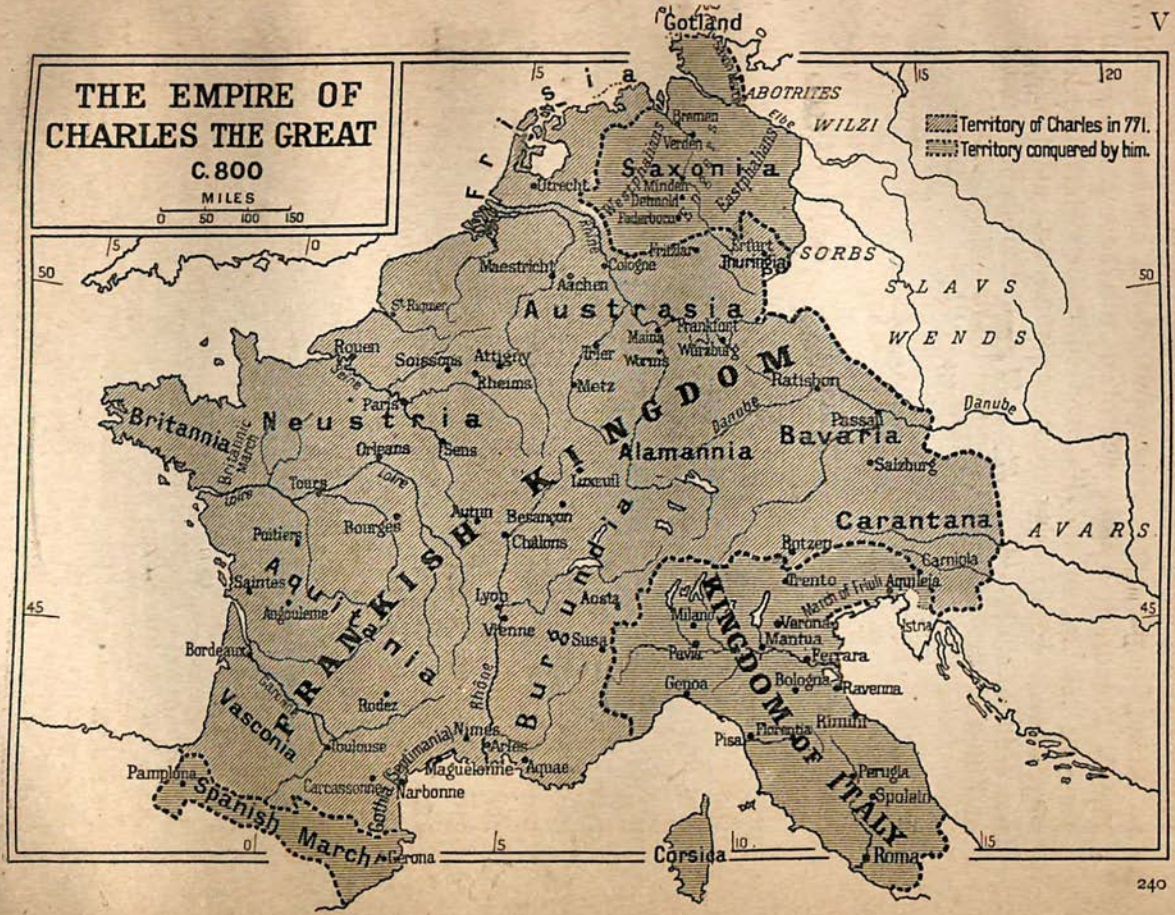
* * * * *

Charles, who was about thirty-two years of age, was now master of all the Frank dominions north of the Alps and of all the Lombard dominions in Italy as far south[2] as the river Garigliano (Liris). He felt himself already justified in assuming the title *Rex Francorum et Longobardorum* in addition to that of *Patricius Romanorum*, which his father Pipin had borne. But his empire was yet to extend itself mightily. He was destined to rule the whole of Western Europe between the limits of the Atlantic, the North Sea, the Eider, the Elbe, the Save, the Liris, the Mediterranean, and the Ebro; and his wars of conquest began without further delay. Leaving Pavia, he hastened northwards and commenced at once the first of the eleven campaigns in which during the next eleven years, with great difficulty and much bloodshed, he subdued the Ostfalen and Westfalen Saxons—savage and embittered foes of Christianity, led by their famous chieftain Widukind.[3] In this first campaign (775) he inflicted a severe defeat on these Saxon heathen, but scarce had peace been restored when news arrived

[1] A legend, curiously similar to that of Tarpeia, relates that a daughter of Desiderius (was it the unfortunate Desiderata?) was in love with Charles and opened the city gate at night to the Frank horsemen, who trampled her to death as they rushed in.

[2] The Lombard duchy of Benevento, though mentioned in the Donation as given over to the Church, seems to have retained independence during all this period. It later formed a part of that Southern Italy whose history was so diverse from that of the rest of the peninsula.

[3] Note in passing (for these northern conquests of Charles the Great belong to German, not to Italian history) that in 785 he transplanted many Saxons to Frank territory, and a general conversion to Christianity followed. In 788 and 791 he subjugated the Bavarians and Avars and incorporated them in his Empire.


THE EMPIRE OF CHARLES THE GREAT
C. 800
MILES
0 50 100 150
Territory of Charles in 771.
Territory conquered by him.
Gotland
Frisia
Saxonia
Westphalians
Eastphalians
Bremen
Verden
Minden
Detmold
Paderborn
Utrecht
Fritzlar
Erfurt
Thuringia
Cologne
Maestricht
Aachen
St. Riquier
Austrasia
Frankfort
Mainz
Worms
Würzburg
Trier
Metz
Rouen
Soissons
Attigny
Rheims
Paris
Neustria
Britannia
Britannic March
Orleans
Sens
Tours
Loire
Poitiers
Bourges
Saintes
Angouleme
Aquitania
Bordeaux
Garonne
Vasconia
Rodez
Toulouse
Pamplona
Spanish March
Carcassonne
Narbonne
Gothia (Septimania)
Gerona
FRANKISH KINGDOM
Burgundia
Autun
Besançon
Châlons
Lyon
Vienne
Aosta
Susa
Rhône
Nimes
Arles
Maguelonne
Aquae
Alamannia
Luxeuil
Danube
Ratisbon
Passau
Bavaria
Salzburg
Carantana
Botzen
Carniola
Trento
Aquileia
March of Friuli
Istria
Verona
Mantua
Milano
Pavia
Genoa
Ferrara
Bologna
Ravenna
Rimini
Florentia
Pisa
Perugia
Spoleto
Roma
KINGDOM OF ITALY
Corsica
ABOTRITES
WILZI
SORBS
SLAVS
WENDS
AVARS
Elbe
Danube

from Italy that some Lombard duke was plotting to set himself up as Lombard king and that Adelchis, the son of the unfortunate Desiderius, had sailed across from Constantinople with a fleet of Byzantine vessels to take part in the rising. Like a thunderbolt Charles flashed down from the Alps and crushed the rebels with an unexpected ferocity, due doubtless to his pent-up indignation.[1] Then, with like suddenness, he hastens back to the north. Here he again punishes the Saxons. A few months later he is in Spain, fighting the Saracens, taking Pampluna and advancing as far as Saragossa. Called back once more (778), he retreats northward, and on the southern slopes of the Pyrenees, at Roncesvalles, the whole of his rear-guard—some say 30,000 men—and many of his paladins are cut down by the Basques (Vascons)—an incident that later won its way to great notoriety through the legends connected with Orlando that were used by the poets of the *Gestes de Charlemagne* and the *Chanson de Roland*, and later again by Boiardo and Pulci and Ariosto, while for us English the disaster has been set to music by Milton in his resounding but strangely misleading verse:

> Where Charlemain with all his peerage fell
> By Fontarabia.

If Milton thought that Charles was slain at the *dolorosa rotta* of Roncesvalles he was much mistaken, for although, as Dante says, he 'lost the holy emprise' (*perdè la santa gesta*) of expelling the Saracens from Spain, within a few months he had again scourged the irrepressible Saxons and was once more in Italy, whither Pope Hadrian supplicated him to come; for His Holiness was again being much annoyed by the nominally subjugated but practically independent Lombard Dukes of Spoleto and Benevento, who paid scant attention to territorial claims of the Papacy or to Donations of Pipin and Constantine. After spending Christmas at Pavia Charles again visited Rome, where he celebrated the Easter festival of 781, and caused

[1] The brother of Paul the Deacon was imprisoned and cruelly treated, and Paul probably regretted the high praises that he had lavished on the magnanimity of the great Frank monarch.

his four-year-old son Carlmann to be rebaptized by Hadrian as Pipin and crowned as 'King of Italy,' and his two-year-old infant Louis (Ludwig) as King of Aquitania—the importance of which ceremonies lies in the fact that Charles therewith formally acknowledged the Pope's right to create kings and thus sowed the seeds of future quarrels about Investiture.

The occurrences of the next few years were of no far-reaching importance. Once more Pope Hadrian, harassed by the Duke of Benevento, hysterically supplicates Charles's presence, and once more Charles visits Italy, spending Christmas at Florence and Easter (787) at Rome. Then a transient excitement is caused by the landing of Adelchis, son of Desiderius, in South Italy, supported by Byzantine troops; but these are chased across to Sicily by the Franks and their Lombard auxiliaries, and we hear no more of Adelchis.

A minor historical incident connected with this visit of Charles to Italy is of great interest for the student of architecture. We are told that Charles gave evidence of his loyal recognition of the Pope's temporal rights by begging his permission to remove 'certain marbles and mosaics' from Ravenna in order to decorate with them his palace and his cathedral at Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen). This cathedral, in which he is (or was) buried, was built on the lines of S. Vitale, and the removal of 'certain marbles and mosaics' meant no doubt the wholesale spoliation of some of the finest churches of Ravenna as well as of the palaces of Theoderic and the Exarchs.

Between 790 and 795 we hear of Charles warring with the Avars, and of course with the Saxons, and of a rebellion in the Friuli headed by his illegitimate son Pipin—who ends his days in a monastery; and of a synod convoked at Frankfurt in which the king takes a lively part as theologian; and of a Latin epitaph of thirty-eight elegiacs written by him [1] on Pope Hadrian, who died in 795 and was succeeded by the famous Leo III.

[1] Perhaps, as Gibbon suspects, with the help of his English adviser, Alcwin. But the verses, some of which are given by Gibbon, are poor stuff; and is 'Hadrianus' a possible commencement for a pentameter?

The new Pope lost no time in showing what line of policy he meant to adopt. He at once sent Charles the banner of the city of Rome and the golden keys of St. Peter's, thus acknowledging him as Patrician and as Defender of the Church,[1] and he at once began to date his Bulls from the accession of the 'King of the Franks and Lombards,' and not from that of

LEO'S TRICLINIUM MOSAIC
From a photo by Brogi

the Emperor, thus breaking the last bond of Eastern sovranty. Charles returned these courtesies by assuring His Holiness that he would defend the Church against external foes and internal heresies, and begged him to aid his exploits, like Moses, with uplifted hands.

[1] See illustration. It depicts a copy of part of a mosaic put up by Leo III in his Triclinium (Banquet Hall) at the Lateran. The original was destroyed about 1740, and copies made from old drawings were soon afterwards erected by Benedict XIV and placed under the Tribune which stands near the Santa Scala (the marble stair from Pilate's house), close to the Lateran Museum. St. Peter, whose figure reminds one of the Vatican statue, is presenting the papal stola to Leo and the (star-spangled ?) banner of Rome to Charles.

It was shortly after this that a *coup d'état* took place in Constantinople which, theoretically, ended the 'Roman Empire' of the East, if such an Empire may be said to have ever existed.[1] The unfortunate youth Constantine VI was deposed and blinded by his mother Irene, who assumed the imperial diadem and was allowed for five years to hold a splendid court and parade the streets of the capital in a gilded chariot drawn by milk-white steeds, attended by a servile throng of nobles, while her blind son groped his way about the palace grounds, neglected, despised, or forgotten.

And now at Rome occurred that which was the immediate cause of the revival, or the continuation, if that word is preferable, of the Roman Empire in the person of Charles the Great. Emboldened by the complete rupture with the Eastern Empire, and possibly hoping to establish some such republican or oligarchical autonomy as that which was already taking shape at Venice and Naples and in other cities, the Roman aristocracy, both lay and cleric, in collusion with partisans of the late Pope, Hadrian, attacked Leo as he was leading a solemn procession through the streets. Thrown from his horse, he was left apparently lifeless and (we are assured by

[1] Feeling ran, and still runs, very high on this much-debated point. I prefer to speak of the 'Eastern Empire'—which was doubtless in one sense the continuation, in a kind of Babylonian exile, of the original Empire—and to reserve the epithet 'Roman' for that Empire of which Rome itself was the metropolis. There can, however, be no doubt that Charles was regarded by contemporaries as the immediate successor of the unhappy Constantine VI—as the sixty-eighth from Augustus—but to the Italians Rome was the 'Mother' and Constantinople only the 'Daughter' of the Roman Empire. Even the *Lauresheim Annals*, quoted by Bryce to support his theory, after stating that the 'name of Emperor had now ceased among the Greeks by reason of the usurpation of the title by a woman,' adds as a potent argument for the election of Charles that he 'held Rome itself, where the Caesars had always been wont to sit.' There are, moreover, many evidences that the Roman people regarded themselves and Rome as the one source of the Imperium Romanum. Thus, a *bulla* of Leo's time is described by Gregorovius which shows Charles's portrait as Imperator and on the obverse a gate of the city of Rome with the legend *Renovatio Romani Imperii*. None would deny that the Eastern Empire was often regarded as the *Roman* Empire (see, for instance, Justinian's description of the Roman Eagle 'in the extreme part of Europe,' in Dante's *Paradiso*), but the feeling at Rome was, I think, as I have stated, and my restricted use of the adjective 'Roman' seems to me to contain no dangerous heresy.

a writer in the *Liber Pontificalis*) with his eyes and tongue torn out. These, however, adds the chronicler, were miraculously restored to him. His friends then conceal him in a convent. Hence he escapes, let down, like St. Paul, by means of ropes, and reaches Spoleto, and sends a piteous appeal to Charles. The king is, however, too much occupied with a revolt of the Saxons and invites Leo to visit him at Paderborn, between Cologne and Hanover, proposing to send the young Pipin (the *legitimate* Pipin, king of Italy) and other notabilities to escort him. This takes place, and Leo is received at Paderborn with great honour, Charles and his warriors kneeling to receive his blessing.

But from Rome soon arrive most serious accusations. It is alleged that if the king would only look into the matter he would find it necessary to depose Leo. At length Charles, following the advice of his English counsellor Alcwin that he should attend rather to the head of his Empire than to the feet, determines to leave the Saxons for a time to their devices and to visit Rome. But finding this impossible—for the Bretons and the Saracens are giving trouble as well as the Saxons—he sends Pope Leo thither, accompanied by prelates and officials, ordering a public trial to take place. The Pope makes a triumphal journey through Italy, and is met (November 799) outside Rome, at the Milvian Bridge, by a vast throng of clerics, senators, nobles, and delegates of the army, the people, and the guilds (*scholae*). He then celebrates Mass at St. Peter's and gives his benediction to the multitude; and a few days later at a formal trial, held in that Banquet Hall (Triclinium) of the Lateran which he himself had built, his accusers are convicted of libel and are sent to France to receive the verdict of Charles.

But Charles was determined to judge the case himself at Rome, and in the autumn of the year 800, being at last free from his enemies, he undertook the journey. At Mentana, fourteen miles from the city—a spot now well known as the scene of one of Garibaldi's fights—he was met by Leo and a great multitude, and on the first day of December he held

a solemn conclave in the basilica of St. Peter, clothed as Patrician in toga and chlamys and surrounded by his paladins and nobles and all the prelates and aristocracy of Rome. No contemporary account of this trial, or of the accusations, has survived, but we know that on December 23, after all the evidence had been heard, Pope Leo ascended the pulpit and, laying his hand on the Gospels, declared his innocence—a scene that is depicted in one of Raffael's celebrated frescos. The accusers—as to whose guilt or innocence we have no means of judging—were condemned to death; but at the intercession of Leo, it is said, the sentence was commuted to that of lifelong exile in France. On the same day, says Villari, there arrived two envoys of the Patriarch of Jerusalem who gave over to Charles the keys of that city and of the church of the Holy Sepulchre.

On Christmas Day a solemn Mass was celebrated by the Pope in St. Peter's, and when the service was concluded he and Charles went to pray at the tomb of the saint—that is, they prostrated themselves, in the sight of all the congregation, before the high altar, where the *Confessio*, or latticed shaft, led down to the apostle's sepulchre. When Charles rose from prayer Pope Leo placed on his head a golden crown, or diadem; whereat from the whole assembly that thronged the vast basilica arose the loud and doubtless well-rehearsed acclamation: '*Carolo, piissimo Augusto, a Deo coronato, magno, pacifico Imperatori, vita et victoria!*' Then Pope Leo, having anointed Charles and his son Pipin, invested the new-crowned Emperor in the purple robe, and by kneeling before him, or, as others say, by kissing him, paid him obeisance or adoration.

It may be asked what motive induced the Pope to 'adore' an Emperor whom he himself had, one may almost say, created. Doubtless there was in the papal mind some superstitious attribution of divine sanctity to the idol that his own hands had fashioned, so that he adored in Charles the Elect of God; but, whatever his theories may have been, or ours may be, in regard to the relations of Pope and Emperor—which theories

are scarcely worth discussion here, or elsewhere—it is perfectly intelligible that, owing Charles immense gratitude for liberation from a very perilous situation, he was glad enough at the time to recognize in him a temporal overlord, though he evidently regarded the Papacy as the sole agent of the Divine will and of higher authority than the Empire.

But was the Papacy on this occasion the medium of heaven's choice? Was Charles selected by the Pope acting for heaven, or for himself? And was his coronation as Emperor legitimately consummated by this arbitrary and somewhat theatrical act of Pope Leo, or had it no right but might, being planned and prearranged by Charles himself? Or, lastly, was it the outcome of the deliberate choice, or sanction, of the Roman Senate and the Roman people?

The writer Eginard, or Einhart, the private secretary and biographer of Charles the Great, asserts—and he probably had it from Charles himself—that the king was completely taken by surprise, having had no inkling whatever of the dramatic scene that the Pope had devised. Everything however tends to prove that all had been prearranged—probably at Paderborn—and that Charles came to Rome with the express purpose of receiving papal and public sanction to a title which he regarded as already his own.[1]

Gregorovius tells us that 'a formal decree of the supreme assembly of all the Roman prelates, clerics, nobility, and people preceded the coronation.' It certainly seems as if the acclamations at the coronation had been preconcerted and rehearsed. Anyhow it is clear that, whatever Charles and Pope Leo may have thought, the Roman people, or perhaps we should say the Italian people, thought that *they* had elected the Frank monarch as their own Imperator and Augustus—a veritable *Roman* Emperor crowned in Rome.

[1] Diplomas (not *quite* certainly genuine) from Pope Hadrian's time (772–95) give Charles the title Imperator. The MS. copy of the Bible given by Alcwin to Charles as a Christmas gift some time before the coronation was addressed: *ad splendorem imperialis potentiae* (Greg.).

KINGS, EMPERORS, AND POPES

568–800

The dates signify accession

ITALY	EASTERN EMPERORS	POPES
	[Justin II 565]	[John III 560]
Lombard kings 568–774		
Alboin Invades Italy 568		
Clefi (Kleph) 573		Benedict I 574
Interregnum 575–85	Tiberius II 578	Pelagius II 578
Autharis and Theodelinda 585	Mauricius 582	
Agilulf and Theodelinda 590		**Gregory I** 590
	Phocas 602	Sambinianus 604
	Heraclius 610	Boniface III 607
Adelwald 615		Boniface IV ..
		Deusdedit 615
		Boniface V 618
Ariwald 625		Honorius I 625
Rotharis (Rotheric, Roderic) 636		
		Severinus 638
	Constantine III Heracleonas Constans II 641	John IV 640
		Theodore I 642
Rothwald 652		Martin I 649
Aribert 653		Eugenius I 654
		Vitalianus 657
Bertharis Godebert 661		
Grimwald 662	Constantine IV ('the Bearded') 668	
Bertharis Restored 671		Adeodatus 672
		Domnus I 676
		Agatho 678
		Leo II 682
		Benedict II 684

ITALY	EASTERN EMPERORS	POPES
	Justinian II 685 (deposed 695)	John V 685 Conon ,, Sergius I 687 (and two Anti-popes)
Cunibert 688	Leontius 695 Tiberius Aspimar 697	
Liutbert 700		
Ragimbert 701		John VI 701
Aribert II 701	Justinian II Restored 705	John VII 705
Ansprand 712	Philippicus Bardanes 711	Sisinnius 708 Constantine
Liutprand 712	Anastasius II 713	
	Theodosius III 716	**Gregory II** 715
	Leo III (Isaurian) 718	
	Constantine V 741	Gregory III 731 Zacharias 741
Hildebrand 744		[Stephen II dies two days after election; his successor therefore also called Stephen II]
Ratchis ,, 744		
Astulf 749		
		bro- { Stephen II 752 thers { Paul I 757
Desiderius 756 (deposed 774)		[Constantine and Philip elected and dethroned, 767]
Charles the Great Assumes title *Rex Longobardorum* 774		Stephen III 768 Hadrian I 772
His son Pipin crowned *King of Italy* 781	Leo IV 775 Constantine VI 780	
Charles crowned as *Emperor of the Romans* 800	(deposed and blinded by his mother Irene, 797)	**Leo III** 795

KINGS OF THE FRANKS

1. **The Merovings.** CLODION (428–48); MEROWIG (Meroveus, 448–58. Age of Attila); CHILDERIC I (458–81); CHLODOVECH (Clovis, Chlodwig, Ludwig, Ludovicus, Louis, 481–511. Age of Theoderic). Four sons of Clovis divide the realm, of whom survives as sole king CHLOTAR (Clotaire, Lothaire, 558–61); CHILPERIC (561–84) . . .; CHLOTAR II (613–28); DAGOBERT (628–38); CLOVIS II (638–56) . . .; CLOVIS III (691–95), who had Pipin of Heristal as his *maire du palais*; then several puppet-kings, so-called *rois fainéants*, till CHILDERIC III, the last of the Merovings, is deposed and sent into a monastery by Pipin the Short in 751.

LINEAGE OF CHARLES THE GREAT (CHARLEMAGNE)

Pépin le Vieux[1]
or Pipin (Pippin) of Landen
(*Master of the Palace in Austrasia under Chlotar II and Dagobert*)
d. 639

- Grimwald[1] *d.* 656
- Gertrud
- Begga (*m.*) Ansegisel
  - Pipin of Heristal[1] *d.* 714
    - Charles Martel[1] *b.* 689, *d.* 741
      - Pipin the Short[1] *Deposes Childeric III and becomes king* 751; *d.* 768
        - **Charles the Great** *b.* 742; *King of Neustria* 768; *Sole Frank king* 771; *King of Lombards* 774; *Emperor* 800; *d.* 814
        - Carlmann *King of Austrasia, Burgundy, and Provence* 768; *d.* 771
      - Carlmann[1] *Retires to Monte Cassino* 746; *d.* 755

[1] *Magistri palatii* (*maires du palais*).

CHAPTER I

GREGORY THE GREAT

IN 589 there was a great inundation of the Tiber, followed by a severe outbreak of the plague, which, as we have seen, had for many years been haunting Europe. Pope Pelagius II was one of the many thousands of victims at Rome. As his successor the unanimous vote of the Romans chose Gregory. Gregory was born about the time when Belisarius captured Ravenna (540), or a little later, when Baduela was reviving the Gothic domination in Italy. The exact date is unknown, but some say that it was the very day (March 21, 543) on which the great saint died whom he specially revered, and whose life he wrote—St. Benedict. His family was of senatorial rank and exceedingly wealthy. His parents, zealous Catholics, trained him in theology and philosophy;[1] but he seems to have chosen, like St. Ambrose, a political career, for when quite a young man he was Prefect, or Praetor, of Rome. Ere long however religious interests began to predominate with him, and he used much of his great wealth in founding six monasteries in Sicily, and a seventh in Rome, giving up for the purpose his ancestral palace on the Celian Hill, where now stands the church of S. Gregorio Magno.[2] Here for some years he lived an austere life, and when about thirty-six years of age he became deacon, yielding probably to the persuasions of Pope Benedict I, who ordained him. From this time onward he seems to have taken much interest in mission work;

[1] He admits (*Ep.* vii) that he knew no Greek: *quamvis Graecae linguae nescius.*

[2] One little room of the original palace is still preserved; also, in a chapel, the marble table at which he daily entertained twelve poor persons—and once, unaware, an angel as thirteenth.

and his enthusiasm may have been stimulated, or even first aroused, by the sight of those fair-haired English youths, exposed for sale as slaves, whose beauty, we are told by Bede, forced from him the exclamation: '*Non Angli, sed Angeli!*'

It is also stated by Bede, who, as also the English 'monk of Whitby,' is one of Gregory's earliest biographers, that he started on a missionary expedition to convert our Anglo-Saxon forefathers; but after three days' journeying he gave up the project and returned to Rome. This happened either because his Roman friends insisted on his return, or because the following tale is true; and why should it not be true? Indeed, there is reason to believe it, for in spite of his resolute and strenuous character Gregory was full of strangely childish superstitions.[1] During the midday halt, it is said, a grasshopper alighted upon the wayworn missionary, who, addressing the friendly creature by its Latin name, *locusta*, was struck by the similarity of the word to *Loco sta!*—'Stay in thy place!'—and he accepted the omen. After his return he was selected by Pope Pelagius to be his nuntius or official correspondent (*apocrisarius*) in Constantinople, and on the Pope's death in 590, being at that time in Rome, he was chosen to succeed him. The election of a Pope needed still in this age the sanction of the Eastern Emperor, and Gregory is said to have written urgently begging him to refuse his consent; but the letter was intercepted, and an attempted flight was foiled, and Gregory at last yielded, and at once, even before the arrival of the imperial sanction, showed his vigorous character

[1] Gregory himself describes to us how the devil (or the Fiend of Arianism) appeared in a church in the form of a black pig and caused great commotion. He wrote several books on relics and miracles and was a great authority on Hell Fire. Some say he invented Purgatory. He gives quite seriously the story about Theoderic being cast into Etna by fiends. From Palestine he brought the (so-called) arm of St. Luke, and another belonging to St. Andrew, to Rome, and was as devout a believer in the rain-bringing efficacy of the 'coat of St. John,' which in seasons of drought used to be shaken in front of the portal of the Lateran, as any Kafir might be in the hocus-pocus of a rain-doctor. Dante-readers will remember the weird legend of the Emperor Trajan being brought back to life (after nearly five hundred years) by Gregory's prayers, in order to be baptized.

by instituting solemn processions for the purpose of deprecating the wrath of heaven and staying the plague.

It was ordered that all the prelates, priests, monks, and nuns, and a great multitude of citizens, clothed in black veils or hoods and divided according to the seven regions of the city, should visit their principal churches, which were all draped in black, and should then proceed to the basilica of the Mother of God (S. Maria Maggiore). The streets were filled with endless processions of suppliants bearing burning tapers and torches and chanting dirges and Kyrie Eleïsons, while ever and anon some black-robed figure would sink to the ground smitten by the deadly disease—a scene in which, says Gregorovius, the Middle Ages seem first to reveal themselves to us in the history of Rome.

Now when the main procession was approaching St. Peter's and Gregory himself had just reached the middle of the bridge there appeared in the sky, hovering above the Mausoleum of Hadrian, which faces the bridge, the figure of an angel bearing a flaming sword; and he was seen to thrust the sword into its sheath, to signify that the plague was stayed. And celestial voices were heard singing the 'Queen of heaven' (*Regina cacli*), and Pope Gregory made response, intoning the *Ora pro nobis*. Hence Hadrian's Mole was named the Castle of the Angel (*Castel Sant' Angelo*). When first a statue of the angel was erected is uncertain. Gregory's successor, Pope Boniface IV, is said to have built a chapel on the summit of the Mole and to have called it 'S. Angelus inter Nubes.' A marble statue, made about 1550 by Montelupo, seems to have been replaced in 1740 by the present bronzen figure, which is by a Flemish sculptor.

During the first part of his pontificate Pope Gregory was very strongly and openly adverse to the Lombards. His letters are full of exhortation to the Italian cities to resist the barbarian and heretic, and he even urges clerics to take up arms. Nor was he less zealous in defending the cause of the Italians against Byzantine oppression, as we can see from his letters addressed to the Empress Constantina, in which he

describes the pitiable state of the people of Sicily and Sardinia (where pagan idolatry seems still to have existed) and the shameless extortions and injustice of the Byzantine officials. The Lombards, however, were the main source of his anxiety. It will be remembered how Agilulf, who was chosen Lombard king by Theodelinda in the same year as Gregory became Pope, came marching south in 593 and devastated the Roman territory—and how Gregory broke off his public lectures on Ezekiel and spent his whole energies in rebuilding the city walls and organizing the forces, till he did not know 'if he were a pastor or a temporal prince.' By his intense patriotism and his vigorous activity he becomes thus the recognized civil head of Rome; he conducts negotiations and looses or binds treaties with Lombard kings and Lombard dukes and Byzantine Exarchs.

His patriotism was equalled by his religious zeal. Not only as Christian had he such abhorrence of paganism that he was suspected of wholesale destruction of ancient monuments and ancient literature, but as Catholic he abhorred perhaps still more fiercely all forms of heterodoxy. The conversion of the pagan Angles and Saxons had been, as we have seen, one of his early ideals, and in 596, six years after his elevation to the papal throne, he sent missionaries, led by St. Augustine the younger, to Queen Bertha, the Frank and Catholic wife of Ethelbert, the king of Kent. In a letter to the Bishop of Alexandria Gregory thus describes this undertaking: 'Inasmuch as the nation of the Angles, who dwell in the most remote corner of the world, still obstinately persist in the worship of stocks and stones, it entered into my mind to send them a monk [a Roman abbot, says Green] to preach unto them, if God so willed; whom when with my licence the bishops of Germany had consecrated they helped him to reach that nation at the end of the world.' He then reports miracles rivalling those of the Apostles, and the conversion of ten thousand of the Angles.[1] However we may regret the extir-

[1] In letters to Augustine he is full of exultation, but warns him against being puffed up with pride on account of his gift of miracles. Ethelbert,

20. Theodelinda's Hen and Chickens
Monza

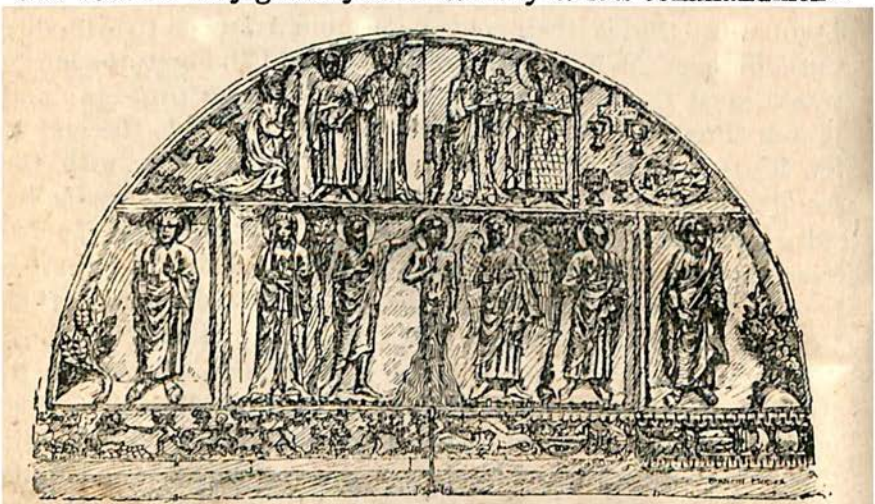
pation of the ancient British Church, it cannot be denied that Gregory's missionary zeal reintroduced among our ancestors the civilization of the Roman world—which, I suppose, was a benefit.

Another missionary enterprise, the success of which seems to have made Gregory very happy, was the conversion of the Lombards—that is, their conversion from Arianism to orthodox Catholicism. As in the case of Berta and Ethelbert, the queen was a good Catholic—having been a Bavarian princess—and it was through Theodelinda that Gregory towards the end of his life found it possible to be on friendly terms with the Lombard monarch and to exert an influence that finally resulted in the complete purification of the Lombard people from the pollution of Arianism. Agilulf probably remained a heretic to the end, although Paul the Deacon denies this. Perhaps the king was not a zealot, and preferred to show favour, or tolerance, for both sides. Anyhow, when his heir, the little Adelwald, was born (end of 602) he allowed him, as we have seen (p. 221), to be baptized as Catholic. The letters that Pope Gregory wrote on this occasion to Queen Theodelinda are most interesting in themselves, and have a further interest for us from the fact that one at least of the presents which he sent to his little godson is to be recognized on the ancient relief that is still to be seen above the portal of the cathedral church of S. Giovanni in Monza, which was originally built by Theodelinda.[1]

like Agilulf, 'refused to forsake the gods of his fathers' (Green). The relations between Augustine and the remnants of the ancient British Christian Church (see p. 69) seem to be evidence of the intensely *Catholic* (or rather *Roman*) proselytism of Gregory and his emissary. The ancient Irish Church (St. Patrick, *c.* 430) was probably, like the British, to a great extent independent of the Papacy. By this time it was not only acting as a bulwark against Anglo-Saxon paganism and converting the Picts (St. Columba, *c.* 560), but was sending its missionaries to continental Europe. One of these many learned and zealous Irish missionaries, the 'Apostle of the Burgundians,' Columban (*c.* 543–615), spent two years with Theodelinda and Agilulf. He had been expelled from France and had settled at Bregenz, on Lake Constance, near which his disciple founded the celebrated monastery of S. Gallen.

[1] See the drawing, copied from a photo by Signor Bianchi, of Monza. Below we see the Baptism and various saints; above is the queen offering a crown to St. John. To the left she is kneeling, and behind her are three crowns—

'The letter that you sent me from the Genoese country,' writes Gregory, 'made me a sharer in your joy by informing me that by the grace of Almighty God a little son hath been bestowed on you, and also, what redounds to your praise, that he has been enrolled in the Catholic faith. . . . I pray God that He may guard you in the way of His commandments



LUNETTE ABOVE THE PORTAL OF MONZA CATHEDRAL

and may make my most excellent little son Adelwald to grow up in His love.' Then, after saying how grievously he is affected with the gout, he adds that to the little Adelwald he is sending 'certain relics, namely, a cross with [a fragment of] the wood of the Holy Cross of the Lord, and a copy of the Holy Gospel in a Persian case. And to my little daughter, his sister, I send three rings, two of jacinth and one of onyx. . . .'

About a year after this (March 14, 604) the gout from which during four years he had suffered ever more intensely ended his life. This disease was perhaps that *male di fianco* which he is said to have chosen, instead of two days in Purgatory,

one perhaps the famous Iron Crown (see Fig. 19), and another the queen's crown, still in her 'Treasury' at Monza, where also are the Hen and Chickens (Fig. 20), goblets, etc., that, together with a representation of Gregory's cross, are to be seen to the right in the relief. The carvings on the base seem to me to be Roman work—probably from some ancient monument.

as a punishment for having succeeded by his prayers in raising Trajan from the dead and baptizing him, so that the pagan Emperor was, against the ruling of destiny, admitted to heaven.[1]

Hodgkin, in his *Italy and her Invaders*, describes Pope Gregory as 'a great Roman rather than a great Saint.' Certainly there is very much in his character, as evidenced by his life and his writings, that excites our admiration and our affectionate sympathy; but there are traits which excite neither. One of these is his proclivity towards gross superstitions; another is his blind intolerance in regard to classic literature and art. 'It is commonly believed,' says Gibbon, 'that Gregory attacked the temples and mutilated the statues of the City; that by the command of this barbarian the Palatine library was reduced to ashes, and that the history of Livy was the peculiar mark of his fanaticism. The writings of Gregory himself reveal his implacable aversion to the monuments of classic genius, and he points his severest censure against the profane learning of a bishop who studied the Latin poets and pronounced with the same voice the praises of Jupiter and those of Christ.' As Gibbon allows, there is no certain evidence that he actually perpetrated the vandalisms laid to his charge; but he was evidently proud of his ignorance of Greek, and though he did not write the barbarous Latin used a little later by Pope Leo III, Pope Stephen III, and others of that age,[2] he had a fanatical detestation of pagan classicism—as shown by the angry letter to the Gallic bishop alluded to by Gibbon (*in uno ore cum Jovis laudibus Christi laudes non se capere*), and by his assertion that it is 'most unfit that the words of the heavenly oracle should be subjected to the rules of the grammarian Donatus.'

A strange and not easily explainable fact must be here

[1] See Dante, *Purg.* x, and *Par.* xx. The legend is told by Paul the Deacon and by Brunetto Latini (Dante's teacher and friend—whom he put in Hell !).

[2] On Leo's Triclinium mosaic (p. 243) we have *bone boluntatis* and *bictoria donas*—which seems almost incredible in a work displayed to a whole refectory of educated prelates. Inscriptions and coins from about 800 often display such spelling and show how rapidly the Latin was degenerating.

mentioned, though one would gladly omit it. In 602 the Emperor Maurice at Constantinople was deposed (see p. 220) by an usurper named Phocas, who with the most monstrous inhumanity murdered his victim after having slaughtered his children in his sight. Now Gregory, when nuntius of Pope Pelagius, had lived at the court of Constantinople and had been associated intimately with the Emperor and his family, for whom he professed much affection. But when Phocas made patronizing overtures to Gregory, instead of repelling them with scorn the Pope wrote a letter (still extant) of the most servile approbation and adulation, abusing his dead friend and exulting in the new hopes that he entertained for the Church founded on the patronage of this monster.[1]

His works are numerous—*Epistolae, Dialogi, Homiliae, Libri Morales,* a *Cura pastoralis* that was translated by King Alfred, etc., and also handbooks of a practical nature giving directions as to the celebration of services. The Church of Rome still follows in the celebration of the Mass to a great extent the Gregorian rule (norm), which differs from that of St. Ambrose, used at Milan. Gregory also added four modes ('tones' or scales) to the four 'authentic' modes of St. Ambrose. The music (antiphones, responses, etc.) based on these eight modes is known as Gregorian Plain-song. One of the most beautiful of all *motifs*—the Grail *motif* in Wagner's *Parsifal*—is taken directly from a Gregorian 'mode.'

As theologian he seems not to have been always quite infallible, if we are to credit what Beatrice told Dante when in Paradise she was explaining to him the circles and sequences of the angelic hierarchies. Gregory, she said, presumed to differ on this point from Dionysius the Areopagite, but 'as soon as he opened his eyes in heaven he laughed at himself'—

> *. . . sì tosto come gli occhi aperse*
> *In questo cielo, di sè medesmo rise.*

[1] His letters to the ill-famed Frank queen, Brunechilde, have also brought him discredit; but Balzani, Hodgkin, and other authorities palliate this offence. For Phocas and his column see Fig. 21 and explanation.

21. S. Maria in Cosmedin and the Phocas Column
Rome

CHAPTER II

ARCHITECTURE AND MOSAICS

300–800

MANY churches and some other buildings have been already mentioned in connexion with Constantine, Theodosius, Galla Placidia, Theoderic, Justinian, and other historical personages, and several sculptures and mosaics of historical interest have been described. It lies of course beyond the scope of this volume to attempt any systematic account of the rise of Italian art, but now and then, as occasion offers, a few general remarks may be acceptable.

In this chapter I shall first point out some of the characteristics of certain styles of architecture which prevailed in parts of Italy during the period that we have already traversed, and then shall add something on the subject of mosaics. The very great differences of opinion that exist among writers on the subject in regard to the origin, classification, chronology, and nomenclature of the various styles—especially in regard to the use of such words as 'Roman,' 'Byzantine,' 'Romanesque,' 'Lombard,' etc.—make it almost impossible to hazard any statement without exposing oneself to criticism. Perhaps under such circumstances it may be best to use, without attempting to justify, the terms which direct impressions, modified by the views of others, have gradually taught me to accept as the most reasonable and convenient.[1] *Vagliami 'l lungo studio e 'l grande amore.*

[1] For these slight sketches it would be absurd to cite the multitudinous authorities that are well known to every student of Italian art; but in the case of the present chapter I might mention as still very useful for information Mothes' *Baukunst des Mittelalters in Italien*, and as very illuminating Rivoira's *Le Origini dell' Architettura Lombarda*, Ricci's *L'Arte dell' Italia*

MEDIEVAL ITALY

Classic Roman art may be considered to have died—though its spirit lingered on for many years, and no exact date can be given for its final extinction—between the age of the Antonines and that of Constantine the Great (*c.* 160–300). Perhaps the best illustration of the almost incredible difference between these two ages as regards art is afforded by the Arch of Constantine (see Fig. 2). The arch itself, whether reconstructed or not by Constantine, certainly dates from the time of the Antonines, possibly from that of Trajan (*c.* 110), and is a fine example of later classic architecture; but a glance at the reliefs—those of Trajan and the Antonines side by side with those of Constantine—will show far better than words can do not only what the sculptors of Constantine's age were like, but also how astoundingly devoid of all art-feeling the Romans themselves must have become if they could look without self-contempt upon this picture and on that.

But even in the age of Constantine architecture was sometimes still inspired with the old classic grace and nobility—as we see in such buildings as Diocletian's villa at Spalato and in S. Costanza at Rome—and this classic spirit continued to exist for many years, now and then appearing like a ghost of the past—as, for instance, in the two celebrated Ravenna mausoleums, that of Galla Placidia and that of Theoderic, both of which are very noble buildings and essentially Roman,[1] though the first is cruciform and domed, and the latter is likewise influenced by Eastern architecture. But this spirit of the past was doomed to extinction, and a new principle was to vitalize a new style. Let us take, as affording a striking proof of this, the question of the arch and the vault.

The characteristics that distinguish Roman from Greek architecture are mainly derived from the appliance of the arch not only to buildings such as temples, but to immense works of

settentrionale, and Sir T. G. Jackson's recent work on *Romanesque Architecture*. For Ravenna I found Professor Ricci's *Ravenna* useful, especially his views in regard to the Theoderic mosaics.

[1] In spite of the dome with its characteristic Byzantine device of 'pendentives,' I entirely agree with Professor Ricci that Galla Placidia's mausoleum is, with its massive pier-arches and barrel-vaulting, *un' opera della decadenza romana, non propriamente bizantina.*

public utility—aqueducts, bridges, vast amphitheatres, enormous baths. The essential difference between the two styles is strikingly brought before the imagination by allowing one's memory to picture the Parthenon and then the Pont du Gard. Great aqueducts and great bridges were unknown to the Greeks as works of architecture, though they had their *Enneakrounoi* and their ship-bridges, like that of Xerxes. Works of such size and for such objects were impossible for a style whose leading principle was that of a horizontal entablature (architrave, frieze, and cornice) supported on columns. It is true that the vault is found in Greek architecture (*e.g.* in ancient tombs at Mycenae), and the ἀετός, or gable, shows a tendency towards the principle of balance, or mutual support. But the adoption by the Romans of the arch, and to some extent of the vault, the apse, and even the dome,[1] introduced entirely new possibilities and made the old Greek orders lose their constructive function and find a new function as decoration; for the engaged columns attached to the huge piers of Roman buildings became of no practical use and were often placed, as in the great amphitheatres, in ornamental colonnades, so to speak, one above the other—an arrangement doubtless artistically false, but which is sometimes, when the proportions are noble, exceedingly impressive. The Roman arch needed no columns; it was in principle nothing but an arch cut out of a thick wall, and the horizontal entablature of the old order became arcuate, being often indicated, as a useless survival, by a decoration running round the arch, and even sometimes from the base of one pier to that of the other.

It was here that the new spirit—the new principle—began to show itself. I have mentioned Diocletian's villa at Spalato and S. Costanza at Rome as survivals of classic art, and this is true as regards noble form and proportion; they are, however, still more striking examples of the vitalizing of old forms by a new spirit; for amidst all the dreary degradation of classic

[1] Roman vaults and domes, though we should perhaps except that of the Pantheon, consisted of one solid mass (made of cement and light porous stone and constructed upon a temporary wooden frame). They were thus practically monoliths, as the dome of Theoderic's mausoleum actually is.

sculpture and architecture and the wholesale plundering of ancient monuments for the erection or (supposed) ornamentation of newer edifices—a process that was generally carried out with the most senseless barbarity—a new spirit was beginning to lead men back to the truth that in architecture (as perhaps in all else) beauty and utility are somehow intimately connected, though the connexion may often be difficult to trace. In this case it was the column that once more was given work to do. In Diocletian's villa (*c.* 300) we find columns really supporting arches, as also in the 'Dome of the Rock' (church of the Holy Sepulchre), perhaps built by Constantine at Jerusalem, while in the Roman mausoleum of Constantine's daughter (later the church of S. Costanza) a massive superstructure of wall and cupola is borne by the arches, each arch resting on short horizontal entablatures supported by two columns, as shown by my rough sketch. This is perhaps the first known example of free columns bearing the whole weight of a large superstructure, as they do in the early Christian basilicas; and a further point of interest is the fact that here the short, coupling entablature is a distinct heralding of the super-capital, or dosseret (*pulvino*), of another new style—the Byzantine—which was destined ere very long to prevail in the Eastern Empire and to affect strongly some parts of Italy. Let us now consider these two new styles—that of the Christian basilica and that of Byzantine buildings.

S. COSTANZA FUORI, ROME

BASILICAS

The origin of the Christian basilica is not known for certain. The word means (in Greek) a palatial building, or the residence of a chief magistrate. In ancient Rome it was used to designate a law-court or assembly-hall, the grandest example of which was the Basilica of Constantine (really built by his rival

22. S. Clemente
Rome

Maxentius), the colossal vaulted ruins of which are known to all who know Rome. And some who do not know Rome may know the Basilica at Trier, which was originally a court-house or market-hall. But the theory that any such public building was ceded to the Christians, or that they or Constantine's architects built the first churches on the model of such edifices, is now considerably discredited, and the ordinary Roman house, with its *atrium* and colonnades, or a *schola* (such a 'school' as that of 'one Tyrannus,' or that *schola Graeca* of which we hear in Rome), is believed to have been the prototype; and the name is explained as meaning 'the King's House,' *i.e.* the Lord's House, of which the word 'church' (*kyriakon*) is another form.

Not long ago a small Christian church of basilican form, S. Maria Antiqua, was brought to light amid the huge ruins at the northern base of the Palatine. It is believed to have been originally the library of the Temple of Augustus, and it is quite possible that it was one of the very first churches in Rome and may have served as model for the earliest Christian basilicas. One can see distinctly how the colonnades and central *aula* were transformed into nave and tribune. The walls are decorated with Byzantine frescos of a subsequent age, which are rapidly fading.

As most readers are doubtless aware, an early Christian basilica is usually an oblong rectangular edifice divided longitudinally into three or five sections by rows of columns supporting wooden roofs, the roof of the central section (the ship or nave) being so much higher than the roofs of the flanking aisles that its supporting walls could be pierced by windows and decorated by mosaics or frescos. The nave was terminated by a semicircular presbytery surmounted by a semi-dome or apse, and at the other end of the building there was a vestibule or portico or a cloistered court (*atrium*), of which a fine extant example is that of S. Ambrogio at Milan.[1]

[1] The vestibule (*νάρθηξ*), such as in St. Mark's, Venice, was an Eastern characteristic—and used by penitents and other *profani*. In Western basilicas the *atrium* took its place, forming a forecourt to protect the church

Even in very early basilicas we find at least the rudiments of a transept, as, for instance, in the three greatest early basilicas of Rome, S. Pietro, S. Paolo (fuori le mura), and S. Maria Maggiore.[1] In the earliest basilicas doubtless the horizontal architecture was used, but the new style, allowing the column to do its work in combination with the arch, seems to have soon found favour. In S. Maria Maggiore we have the architrave, in S. Paolo and S. Clemente the archivolt, and in S. Pietro (the ancient basilica) the nave columns bore architraves while the outer aisle columns bore arches.

Whether Christian basilicas, or indeed any churches not subterranean, existed before the 'Peace of the Church' (313) is not certain. From the time of Constantine[2] onward till the days of Theoderic and the coming of the Lombards (say 250 years) the basilican style prevailed at Rome, where about twenty[3] churches still possess more or less trace of their classical or basilican originals, the columns or foundations having frequently belonged to ancient temples, or the later edifice having been reconstructed on the lines of the original basilica. Of these the finest is probably S. Maria Maggiore (founded *c.* 352), and a most interesting example is the *lower* church of S. Clemente (founded *c.* 320, and copied in plan by the later *upper* church), while among reconstructions must now be numbered the magnificent S. Paolo fuori, which until the fatal fire of 1823 was the grandest extant ancient basilica. It seems strange, considering that Rome was for so long under Byzantine sway and Byzantine influences, that it should

from noise, etc. The *atrium* of old St. Peter's (*Il Paradiso*) was especially large and fine, with its white marble pavement and its fountain surmounted by the famous bronzen pine-cone, mentioned by Dante. Note that apses were not always at the east end. In Rome they are directed towards almost every point of the compass.

[1] See Figs. 4 and 5, and for S. Pietro see p. 297.

[2] Constantine's churches in Jerusalem have been mentioned, p. 39 *n.* The Lateran Baptistery (in which he is said, falsely, to have been baptized by Silvester—a scene depicted in Raffael's fresco) and the oft-rebuilt Lateran basilica are, together with S. Costanza, the chief Constantinian buildings in Rome.

[3] Seeing that in the time of Gratian (*c.* 380) there were 424 pagan temples in Rome, the number of Christian basilicas seems to have been surprisingly small.

possess scarcely any trace of Byzantine architecture, especially as later (*i.e.* after the iconoclast squabble had brought Eastern artists to Rome) Byzantine influence on Roman mosaics is distinctly perceptible.

The only city of Italy that rivals—and it perhaps outrivals—Rome in regard to its basilicas is Ravenna, which for three centuries, as capital of the Western Empire, of the Ostrogothic kingdom, and of the Exarchate, was Rome's political and ecclesiastical rival. These splendid Ravenna basilicas (of *c.* 500–600) have been already described in connexion with Theoderic and Justinian. They differ from the Roman basilicas in so far as they show, as do also the somewhat later basilicas of Grado and Torcello, Byzantine influence in various details, such as the *pulvino*, or dosseret (see Figs. 17 and 23 and p. 269), and the exceedingly beautiful and original sculpture of the white marble capitals.

We have thus during the first three centuries or so of the period 300–800, besides the barbarous use of ancient work in the construction of new buildings—a process that merits no appellation as architecture—firstly, rare revivals of classical style, of which very little trace exists, but which we can note in such buildings as the Ravenna mausoleums of Galla Placidia and Theoderic and can believe to have been favoured by the Romanizing King of the Ostrogoths in the creation of his palaces and other edifices. Then we have a new and vital style, which we may call that of the Christian basilicas.[1] Then again, we have the so-called Byzantine style; and about this a few words must now be said.

Byzantine Architecture

When treating the reign of Justinian I spoke of the many buildings erected by him or under his patronage (p. 202), and especially mentioned his great cathedral of S. Sofia at

[1] It may be well to say here that some writers apply the term 'Romanesque' to all the different styles of architecture (basilican, Byzantine, Lombard, Norman, etc.) which adopted and adapted the principles of the Roman arch and vault. I prefer to limit the epithet to the style that in Italy resulted from Lombard influences acting on classical and basilican styles.

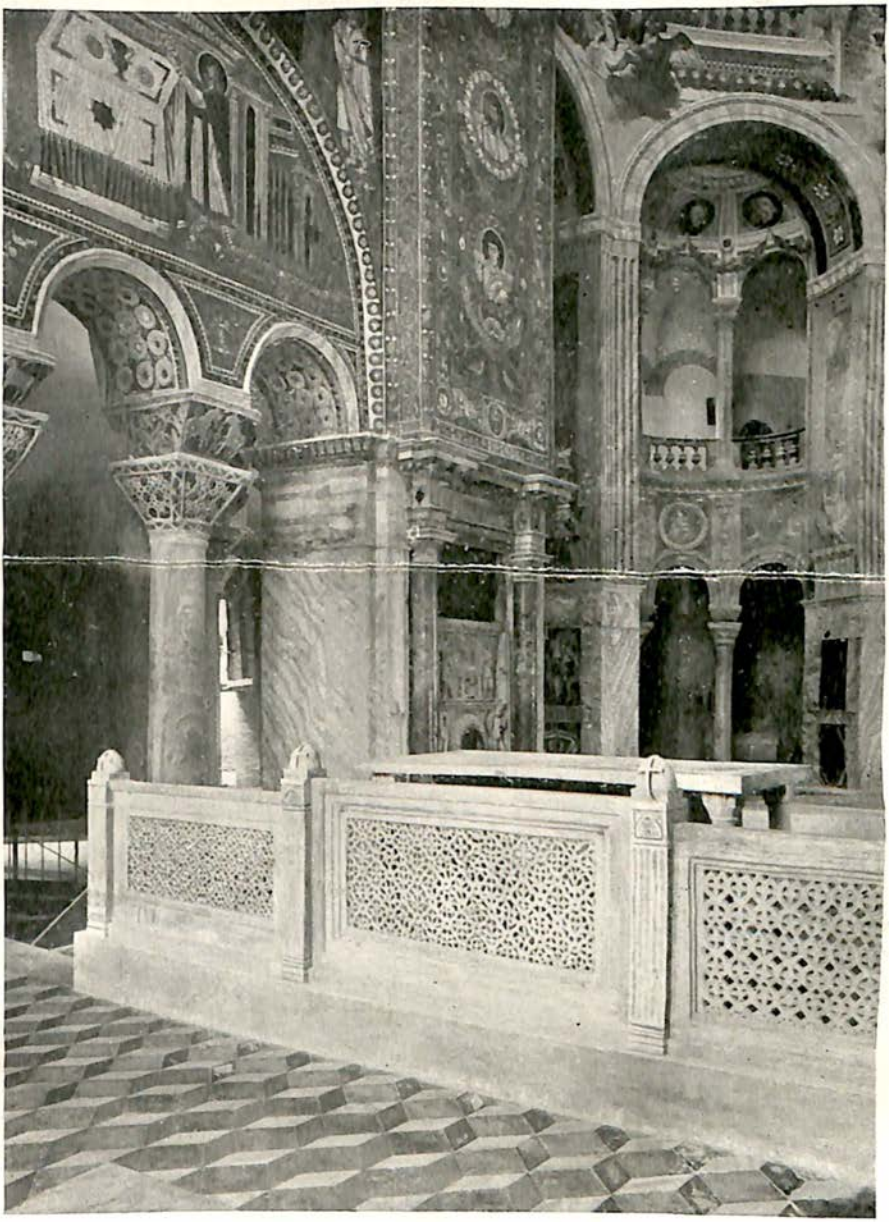
Constantinople and the church of S. Vitale at Ravenna. It will be remembered that these churches (which we may take as the two finest examples of the original Byzantine style) are of what is called the 'central type'—that is, they are not built on the plan of a Roman basilica.

It was found—perhaps more in the East than in the West—that for certain ceremonies the basilica, especially when it became cruciform by the addition of the transept, did not possess the same conveniences as a circular or polygonal space, such as was offered by baptistery churches, by the 'Dome of the Rock' at Jerusalem, and by buildings such as S. Costanza or that greatest of all round churches (once a Roman market), S. Stefano Rotondo. In the East the arms of the Greek cross were therefore shortened and covered by vaulted cupolas, and the central space was also covered by a dome; thus was produced the five-domed church, of which we have a fine later example in St. Mark's at Venice. Also a somewhat simpler form of the central type was used, namely that which is seen in S. Vitale,[1] where a central octagonal space is covered by a dome supported on eight massive piers and is surrounded by seven deep vaulted and galleried recesses and a still deeper apsidal presbytery. Similar in style, but far greater and more complicated, and with an *oblong* central space covered by a dome and two half-domes, is S. Sofia—any further description of which would take us too far afield.

It will have been noticed that in connexion with these Byzantine churches the dome plays an important part. It is indeed their most striking characteristic, and whether or not it was originally copied from the huge Roman *Thermae*, as Rivoira asserts, or came from the far East, it was, as it were, re-created by the Byzantine architects—perhaps by that Athemius of Tralles, in Asia Minor, who built S. Sofia for Justinian. How this was done needs to be explained.

The Roman dome, or cupola, was either a monolith, like

[1] On the same plan are S. Lorenzo at Milan (*c.* 550) and Charles the Great's cathedral at Aachen.



23. S. Vitale
Ravenna

the huge stone that roofs Theoderic's mausoleum, or consisted of a mass cemented together over a temporary wooden structure and resting on a circular building, as a lid on a pot, with no lateral thrust. This system was very cumbrous and expensive, and the Byzantine builders devised other methods. They found it possible to construct a dome (as the dome of S. Vitale) out of terra-cotta vessels or pipes fitted together in spirals, and this core they covered with plaster, thus forming a cupola very much lighter than the Roman. But it still needed massive piers because of the stronger lateral thrust exerted by a composite structure. And there was another difficulty. The space to be covered with a dome was generally square or polygonal. How is one to erect a round dome on a square base? If one merely fills up the corners of the square so as to form a circular base the support is very weak. The solution of this difficulty by what are called 'pendentives' is one of the most important feats of Byzantine architecture.

Instead of building one's dome on the square base, one erects arches (say semicircles) on the sides of the square and fills up to the same height the spaces between them. These fillings (the 'pendentives'), whose internal surfaces will be concave (apse-like) and whose contours will be that of a curvilinear triangle, will form by their upper curved sides a circle.[1] On this circular base the Byzantines built their dome, or, in later times, erected a lofty circular 'drum' on which the cupola was poised mid-air. And note that this circular base affords very strong support, for the pendentives, wedged in between the arches, transmit the whole vertical thrust of the dome to them.

Another characteristic of the Byzantine style is the form of the capital, which, as the column has now to support an enormous weight, is no longer concave, deeply cut, and with projecting ornament, as the Corinthian capital, but solidly convex and sculptured in shallow relief, often with very

[1] It will, of course, be the circle passing through the vertices of the four semicircular arches, and exactly above and equal to a circle *inscribed* in our square.

beautiful, though conventional, leaf and flower tracery or basket-work [1] ornament, or with deep-drilled delicate lace-like decoration, or exquisitely chiselled wind-blown foliage. And finally, in order to make the arch higher and lighter, the Byzantine capital was often crowned by the dosseret, or *pulvino*, which has been already mentioned and is depicted in several of our illustrations.

Still another characteristic is the use of coloured marble sawn into thin plates, with which Byzantine edifices (not seldom of brick) were often covered internally and externally —a practice that, as we all know, is eloquently defended by Ruskin, and certainly lends itself to very rich and splendid effects.

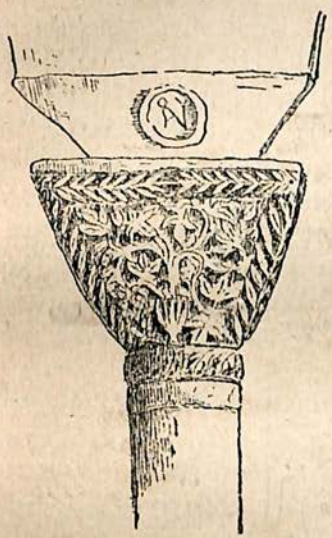
Mosaics

In connexion with basilicas and Byzantine architecture the subject of mosaics claims our attention for a few moments. Very fine examples of ancient Roman stone (also glass) mosaic-work exist, such as the splendid Nile scene depicted in a pavement at Palestrina and the celebrated 'Battle of Issus' found at Pompeii; but the art of decorating walls and apses with great mosaic pictures seems to have originated among the Christians of Rome contemporaneously with the erection of the first basilican churches, and to have spread from Italy to Constantinople, where it developed other characteristics. The subject is one of great interest and great extent. I must content myself with selecting a few striking examples of the earlier Roman and Ravennate mosaics; for real Byzantine mosaics, which were once doubtless very numerous and of great magnificence, have been almost exterminated by iconoclasm and Latin Crusaders and Turks—while those that still remain, in S. Sofia or other mosques, are to a great

[1] Also in Solomon's Temple the capitals made by Hiram were with 'nets of checker-work' and of 'lily-work'—which, as Ruskin (following Marchese Selvatico) points out, exactly describes a well-known Byzantine type, given opposite, with leaves and petals of a lily, and network or basket-work. See *Stones of Venice*, xxvii, where it is shown that all capitals belong to the concave or to the convex (*e.g.* Doric) order.

extent concealed by plaster and matting. But we shall be able to trace the Byzantine style in some of the Italian mosaics.

The first great mosaics of Christian Rome date, as is natural, from the age of Constantine, for before the 'Peace' the Christians had no large churches. Moreover, the revival of *glass* mosaic seems to date from this period. The earliest extant are perhaps those of S. Costanza (*c.* 320). This edifice was built as a



S. VITALE

'NETS OF CHECKER AND LILY WORK.' S. VITALE

mausoleum, not as a church, and the fact that Constantine was an unbaptized pagan till his last hours makes it intelligible why these mosaics—some of which remain, while others are known from old drawings—were almost purely decorative and non-Christian, depicting vintage scenes and interlacing vine-traceries and birds and Cupids, all of exquisite workmanship. Another splendid early mosaic (*c.* 370) is to be seen in S. Pudenziana—a church said to have been built on a site belonging to Pudens, the host of St. Peter (mentioned by St. Paul), and consecrated to his daughter Pudentia. Here (Fig. 24) we have, as in many other great apse mosaics, a grand symbolical

theme. The Saviour, a figure of great dignity with bearded face and hair falling on His shoulders, is enthroned amidst the Apostles in front of the walls and towers of New Jerusalem, in the midst of which rises the Mount of Calvary, with the Cross Triumphant, around which hover the animal-figures of the Evangelists. In these great apocalyptic scenes Christ is generally the central figure, and He is accompanied by angels (often very majestic forms), and by all kinds of symbolical images, such as the seven-branched candlestick, the rivers of Paradise, the enthroned Lamb, the twelve Apostolic sheep (generally issuing forth from buildings representing Jerusalem and Bethlehem), the Evangelistic animals, and (stretched forth from a cloud) the consecrating Hand of God. On the tribune arch and the walls of the nave are generally Biblical scenes or personages. Other magnificent early mosaics were those of S. Paolo fuori (Fig. 4), which were put up soon after the church was finished by Honorius (*c.* 420); but of these we have now only reconstructions, the originals having perished in the fire of 1823.

There are mosaics in the ancient basilica of S. Maria Maggiore (Fig. 5) which offer striking evidence of a transition phase during which Christian ideas still clothed themselves in pagan forms—for it was long before Christianity entirely discarded all that it had adopted, not only from classic decorative art but from classic mythology and symbolism.[1] The mosaics in question—those on the nave walls—date from about 350, being perhaps a century older than the wondrous scenes from the life of the Virgin on the apse arch. They depict Old Testament episodes, and are not only very quaint in other respects, but also represent Biblical characters in pagan form, the Israelite warriors being veritable Roman legionaries, the angels Roman Victories, and the saints and patriarchs Roman divinities.

The last Roman mosaic of the earlier and nobler style that

[1] *E.g.* the vine, the fish, the dove, the peacock, Psyche, Cupid, etc. Orpheus was used as a symbol of Christ in early art, and a thousand years later Dante exclaimed, 'O supreme Jove who wast crucified for us on earth!'

24. Mosaics in S. Pudenziana and S. Prassede 270
Rome

I can mention—one of very great dignity and beauty—is to be seen in the apse of SS. Cosma e Damiano. It dates from about 530. In the centre is the majestic figure of the Saviour standing on a shimmering cloud and accompanied by St. Peter, St. Paul, and the two martyrs. In the foreground are the four streams of Paradise, the Lamb and sheep. A point of great interest is the face of Christ, which is the new type. The Christ of early art (*e.g.* in some Ravenna mosaics) is usually young and beardless. In S. Pudenziana we have already met, perhaps for the first time, the bearded face, the longer hair, and the older and more serious expression, and here we have the same type more fully developed and almost identical with that of later Italian art.

After the coming of the Lombards the Byzantine style began to get the upper hand at Rome, where for a time close relations with the Eastern Empire were favoured as a means of counteracting the new barbarian invasion. But towards the middle of the eighth century Rome had become virtually independent and, as was natural, Roman artists were again in favour. Art, however, had sunk very low, though the *scholae* seem to have still preserved some tradition of the noble style. A striking evidence of this is the Triclinium mosaic of Pope Leo III, a detail of which is given on p. 243. Here we find not undignified figures of Christ (the full-bearded type) and of the Apostles, and the seated figure of St. Peter (perhaps taken from the Vatican statue) has some grandeur; but in the kneeling figures of Leo and Charles there is no little medieval grotesqueness.

The magnificent Ravenna mosaics date from the period *c.* 440–560. The earliest are those in the mausoleum of Galla Placidia, which have been already partly described (p. 91). They are purely Roman in style and decoratively most beautiful, with their dark blue ground. The most remarkable of them is that which depicts Christ as a young shepherd, beardless but with long hair, seated amidst His flock. Some ten years later are the mosaics of the Baptistery (Fig. 10), which Bishop Neon 'converted' from a Roman bath-house about 450. In

the centre of the dome is the Baptism—a very fine picture on gold ground—surrounded by the Apostles moving in procession, their figures depicted on a rich blue background. The mosaics of the Santo Spirito Baptistery ('converted' from another Roman bath-house for the use of Theoderic's Arians) show the same *motif*, but the Apostles are more dignified and the Christ is much younger—indeed, a mere youth.[1]

Theoderic's basilica of Jesus Christ, later S. Apollinare Nuovo, has already been described (pp. 168 *sq.*), and it has been pointed out that (according to Professor Ricci, with whom I entirely agree) some of the mosaics put up by the Arian Ostrogoth king were replaced by the processions of virgins and martyrs which now adorn the nave walls (Fig. 12). These substitutions, erected evidently after the capture of Ravenna by Belisarius (540), offer us a very useful stepping-stone, so to speak, from the Roman to the Byzantine style. Nothing could be finer in their calm and impressive dignity than the figures of the saints and prophets and the two groups of angels amidst whom are seated Christ and the Virgin, and the variety of attitude and expression is as remarkable as the skill with which the human form and the drapery are sculpturesquely outlined and delicately coloured,[2] whereas in the case of the martyrs and virgins 'all love of form has yielded to the desire for decorative effect. The figures succeed each other without variety, as if stamped by the same die.[3] The folds of the white garments are indicated by long, rigid, angular lines, which often grossly misrepresent the bodily forms. The hands are all exactly the same, the feet clumsy, the heads badly drawn, the faces with only four or five shades of colour.'

Again, in S. Vitale one has only to lift one's eyes from the Justinian mosaics (Fig. 17), with their jewelled magnificence of diadems and court dresses, to the earlier mosaic of the apse,

[1] This fact and the much less decorated style of this Arian mosaic make me sometimes think that the Orthodox Baptistery must have been furnished with its mosaics *after* the Gothic domination, *i.e.* after 540. But there is no trace of Byzantine style in them. They are purely Roman.

[2] 'The heads show fourteen shades of colour' (Ricci).

[3] But it is true that such repetition in some cases 'acquires the value of a musical rhythm' and is very impressive decoratively.

where in calm beauty and dignity amidst white-robed angels the youthful Saviour sits enthroned on the orb of the universe, to feel oneself suddenly rapt away into a higher sphere. The last of these Ravenna mosaics that I can mention is that of S. Apollinare in Classe, where an apocalyptic vision of the Transfiguration is presented. In the centre is a Cross—the symbol not of blood-offering and atonement by agonizing suffering, but of victory and of joy. Nigh the Cross are seen the three attendant apostles on Mount Tabor, symbolized by sheep; then lines of other sheep, and flowery meads, amidst which stands the grand figure of S. Apollinare. This mosaic is much restored, but it is of very noble conception and worthy to be ranked among the finest of the Roman school.

Magnificence and gorgeous colour, such as characterized Byzantine mosaics, may of course be used for really artistic and not merely decorative ends (as we see in the case of some later Venetian painters), but when unaccompanied by the love of true form it is bound to end in mere display and to favour mechanical production and meaningless repetition. During Justinian's reign the early Byzantine style in mosaics began to influence Italy, which by the reconquest had been brought to a very pitiable state and had probably lost all sense for art except what was kept alive by certain guilds or brotherhoods (*scholae*) at Rome. But this Byzantine influence has left, except at Ravenna and in a few churches at Rome (*e.g.* S. Agnese fuori), very little trace. The Lombard wars and domination may account for the disappearance of much that is mentioned by chroniclers, and by the time (*c.* 730) that the iconoclastic edict of the Emperor Leo had induced many Byzantine artists to migrate to Italy (where their pictures and images were in great favour) the art of wall mosaics seems to have almost died out at Rome. Here, after 800, we find very few works of mosaic, and they show an ever deeper decline into what Kugler calls 'Byzantine deformity.' But in some of the Italian cities that remained longer under Byzantine supremacy Eastern influence not only in the mosaic art but in metal-work (bronze and silver and

gold and enamel) retained a strong hold. At Venice, which became the chief emporium for Eastern trade, there was a great revival of Byzantine mosaic decoration, especially in connexion with the rebuilding of St. Mark's after the fire of 976 and its reconstruction in Byzantine style. Of its very numerous and magnificent older mosaics the earliest date from this period, and after the capture of Constantinople by the Latins in 1204 the renewed influx of Byzantine artists caused another great revival, the results of which extended over more than three centuries—down to the days of Tintoretto. In regard to these Venetian mosaics we must remember that though the impulse came from Byzantine art the style was much ennobled by Italian genius.

Also in South Italy and Sicily during the period 1000–1200 (the time of the Normans) there was evidently a large school of Byzantine artists, for we find splendid Byzantine mosaics adorning the great churches and palaces of Norman and Saracen architecture (*e.g.* in Salerno, Palermo, Cefalù, Monreale, etc.).

The influence of Byzantine painting on the art of Italy will be discussed later. Here it need only be remarked that many of these Byzantines were clever craftsmen without the slightest sense of art and possessed great technical sleight and that facility and rapidity of production which help to ruin an art that is tending to degenerate. The output of icons was enormous, especially after the Eastern Church had given up its iconoclastic errors and had reverted to orthodox image-worship.[1] Christendom was deluged with wonder-working pictures—Madonnas and saints, with orange or brick-red faces tinged and shaded into cadaverous green, set against a background of gold and decked out with gilt ornaments and gorgeous apparel. The entirely mechanical character of this output is well intimated by the following assertion

[1] See p. 230. In Justinian's S. Sofia there was probably only a great mosaic Cross, such as still exists in some Eastern churches. All figures were avoided, and at first only symbols allowed. After Irene's Nicaean Council (787), and still more after the final relapse to image-worship in 860, icon-manufacture became a very lucrative profession.

made by one of the speakers at the notorious second Council of Nicaea, summoned by pious Empress Irene, who blinded her own son: 'It is not,' said the icon-advocate, 'the invention of the painter that creates the picture, but the law and tradition [*θεσμοθεσία καὶ παράδοσις*] of the Catholic Church. It is not the painters, but the Holy Fathers who have to invent and dictate.'

Roman-Lombard Architecture (early Romanesque)

As in the history of ancient Greece, we encounter also in the history of Italy, during the Lombard domination (*c.* 568–774), a Dark Age; and this Dark Age is longer than, if not quite so hopelessly obscure as, the three centuries that followed the Dorian conquest. In the case of Italy, as in that of Greece, the result of conquest by a Northern race was a long and dreary season which was succeeded by a splendid outburst of art—perhaps due to the admixture of the fresh and virile, if somewhat barbarous, vigour of the North with the Southern, somewhat effeminate, sensibility for beauty of form and colour.

We have seen how later and degenerate classical Roman architecture developed new life and new forms by adopting such devices as the arch-bearing column, the dome, and the 'pendentive.' But we have also seen how during the three centuries (300–600) in which the basilican and Byzantine forms of Roman architecture were at their prime the old informing spirit of native art[1] lived on, ready at any moment to materialize itself in still another shape as soon as the requisite conditions presented themselves; for there seems to be good reason to believe that at Rome, through all the tumultuous years of barbarian and Byzantine invasion, surviving sieges and famines and pestilences and even the temporary abandonment of the city by all its human inhabitants, guilds or brotherhoods existed which transmitted from one

[1] I mean that artistic spirit which had been native to Italy since the age of the ancient Etruscans and the Greek colonies, and which was the *antiqua mater*, as it were, of classical Roman art, as also of all later Italian art.

generation to another certain arts and crafts. We hear of 'schools' in Rome, such as the *schola Graeca* founded by Pope Hadrian I in 782, and *scholae Francorum, scholae Saxonum*, and the like. It is indeed uncertain whether these were theological or artistic colleges, such as exist also in our days at Rome, for foreign students, or were identical with the guilds and associations of merchants, doctors, musicians, etc., which are mentioned by chroniclers as existing in Rome in the seventh and eighth centuries and had probably existed there from early times. But what makes one feel fairly certain that some such guilds of architects existed is the fact that here and there are to be seen beautiful specimens of architecture and of sculpture which are certainly neither Byzantine nor Lombardic and seem to date from what I have called the Dark Age, when in Italy, to judge from all other relics, art was fallen on very evil days. It must be confessed that these specimens are rare, and of doubtful date and provenance; but they suggest the possibility that by reason of the Roman guilds the race of native artists did not quite die out; and it seems not improbable that craftsmen of these guilds found their way to the Gothic and Byzantine courts at Ravenna, to the cities of South Italy and of the northern Exarchate, as well as to the islands of Venetia, in all of which places traces of them seem to exist.[1]

But where we seem to trace quite distinctly the existence of Roman craftsmen is in Northern Italy during the domination of the Lombards—first at the court of Agilulf and Theodelinda, who built many fine churches, and later in many parts of the Lombard kingdom.

The Lombards were originally a very savage race—so savage that Narses had to send his Lombard allies back to their

[1] For instance, columns, capitals, or carvings at Torcello, Toscanella, Brescia (ancient S. Salvatore), perhaps at Grado and Cividale, at Naples (capitals in S. Restituita, and perhaps the Joseph relief) and other southern towns; moreover, many beautiful sarcophagi, as in S. Apollinare in Classe at Ravenna. Some of these relics may possibly be classical Roman work, which was often appropriated; but not seldom they seem to be genuine Italian work in the ancient style and to date from the seventh or eighth century.

25. S. Pietro, Toscanella

Northern homes on account of their barbarities—and during the first years of their Italian domination, in the reigns of Alboin and Clefi and the following ten years of anarchy (575–585), doubtless civilization suffered a great deal at the hands of this *gens nefandissima et sceleratissima*. But the descendants of these Northern barbarians already in the early days of Agilulf and Theodelinda (590) began, as we have seen, to contemplate with amazement the portraits of their savage ancestors, and to feel enthusiasm for the arts and refinements of the land that they had conquered. At Pavia, Cremona, Bergamo, Perledo, and other places in the Como district Theodelinda erected churches and towers, and at Monza she rebuilt and adorned with frescos the summer palace of Theoderic (some say, in 'Byzantine style'), and adjoining it built a fine basilica, whose seventy *ampullae* of sacred oil and whose Treasury and curious lunette were described in the last chapter.

The question here arises, whence did Theodelinda get her architects and sculptors for all these buildings? Whence, too, did her husband, King Agilulf, procure the 'Italian artificers' whom he sent to the Avars in order to teach them shipbuilding (*ad faciendas naves*)? Were these architects and artificers Italian,[1] or Byzantine craftsmen from Ravenna? Or, if not, what other Italian city could have produced them? There is a seductive theory—based, it must be confessed, on a rather slight foundation—that, driven away from Rome, where art and learning, and language too, had sunk to a very low level, many members of the Roman artistic brotherhoods made their way northward and chose for their headquarters that little island in Lake Como, the Isola Comacina, which, it may be remembered, was fortified by Theoderic and was later a strong *propugnaculum* of the Byzantine Exarchate, but was captured by the Lombards during the reign of Autharis (587). This theory is founded on the fact that 'Comacine

[1] Or were they Lombards? And were the early Lombard churches built in a rough barbaric style imitated from that of the still earlier wooden structures of their Northern home? See Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, i, 27. It seems possible that unskilful building may account for the entire disappearance of almost all these primitive Lombard churches.

master-builders' are mentioned by chroniclers. For instance, by the laws of Rotharis (*c.* 640) these *magistri Comacini* are granted certain privileges in regard to slaves, menials, contracts, etc., and a century later (739), in the reign of Liutprand, a Comacine master named Rodpert (apparently a Northman, not a Roman!) is mentioned as being present at Toscanella, evidently engaged in building the beautiful basilica of S. Pietro (Fig. 25).

These Comacine masters, so called, it is generally supposed, from the island[1] or the region of Como, play a great part in some modern theories concerning the origins of Romanesque architecture—that architecture which after a very long and dark period of undeveloped existence (from *c.* 600 to *c.* 1000 or later) seems to have burst forth with almost incredible suddenness in all its beauty and perfection.

But whether the word *comacinus* has anything to do with the island, or with Como, is very uncertain, and I am not at all sure that we should contemptuously reject the suggestion that it may merely mean a member of a guild of brother masons—*co-maciones*, the Low-Latin *macio* being the source of our word 'mason'—although we may not be prepared to believe that these *magistri Comacini*, to whom so many privileges and freedoms were granted, were none other than freemasons, the medieval inheritors and transmitters of the masonic mysteries of King Solomon.[2] However that may be, we may, I think, regard it as a fact that Italian, probably Roman, architects and sculptors were largely employed by the Lombard conquerors, and that, if not the architects, the sculptors in their carvings had to accommodate their artistic idiosyncrasies as best they might to the characteristic tastes of their masters. Now their masters exhibited delight in grotesqueness and in more

[1] Its subsequent history may interest the reader. In 962 Berengarius took refuge there, but was betrayed by the Larian people to Otto. In 1169 the settlement was razed for having sided with Milan. The latest news I have of it is imparted by a prospectus issued by its proprietor, who advertises its charms as a site for a modern hotel and casino!

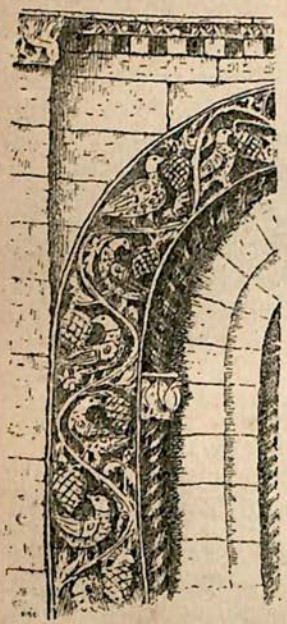
[2] Sir T. G. Jackson suggests that a 'freemason' was originally merely a worker in *freestone* (soft, sandy stone).

or less monstrous animal forms and a total insensibility to repulsive ugliness—for we meet these characteristics in all their naked hideousness north of the Alps and wheresoever in North Italy we encounter what is evidently Lombard, or ultramontane, work pure and simple.[1] But in the architecture itself—not merely its detail—the Roman, or Comacine, evidently held his own as master-builder, and, while accommodating himself to the requirements and the traditional ideas of his Lombard employer, gradually developed a new style, that which we know as Lombard Romanesque, the source, if I am not mistaken, of all other Romanesque architecture—Tuscan, German, and Norman. But this is a question that will occupy us later, when we consider the special character of this Romanesque architecture, which after long obscuration so suddenly appeared in wonderful perfection. Here I shall only add a few somewhat debatable data in connexion with the rare relics of the first and darker half of the Dark Age of Romanesque architecture—the period from the coming of the Lombards to the coronation of Charles the Great.

The first Lombard basilica mentioned by chroniclers is one built near Bergamo by Theodelinda's first husband, King Autharis. Theodelinda's many buildings we have already mentioned. Of her Monza basilica—a building with octagonal centre—there exist only some old round and octagonal columns with ancient capitals worked over with Lombard birds and beasts; of her palace only a few doubtful remains survive. Of the original Lombard S. Michele in Pavia only a few characteristic Lombard capitals are extant. The cathedral of Padua offers perhaps the earliest (much restored) Lombard façade, with blind arcades and plain round windows. (The grand Romanesque wheel or rose windows were later.) The old church of S. Salvatore at Brescia, now a part of the Museum,

[1] A striking example is afforded by the grotesque Lombard carvings on the beautifully proportioned Baptistery tabernacle at Cividale (*c.* 740). A similar Roman-Lombard tabernacle of about the same date, but entirely free from repulsive grotesqueness, is in S. Apollinare in Classe, the beautiful Roman-Lombard sarcophagi in which church offer an extraordinary contrast to the barbarous reliefs at Cividale.

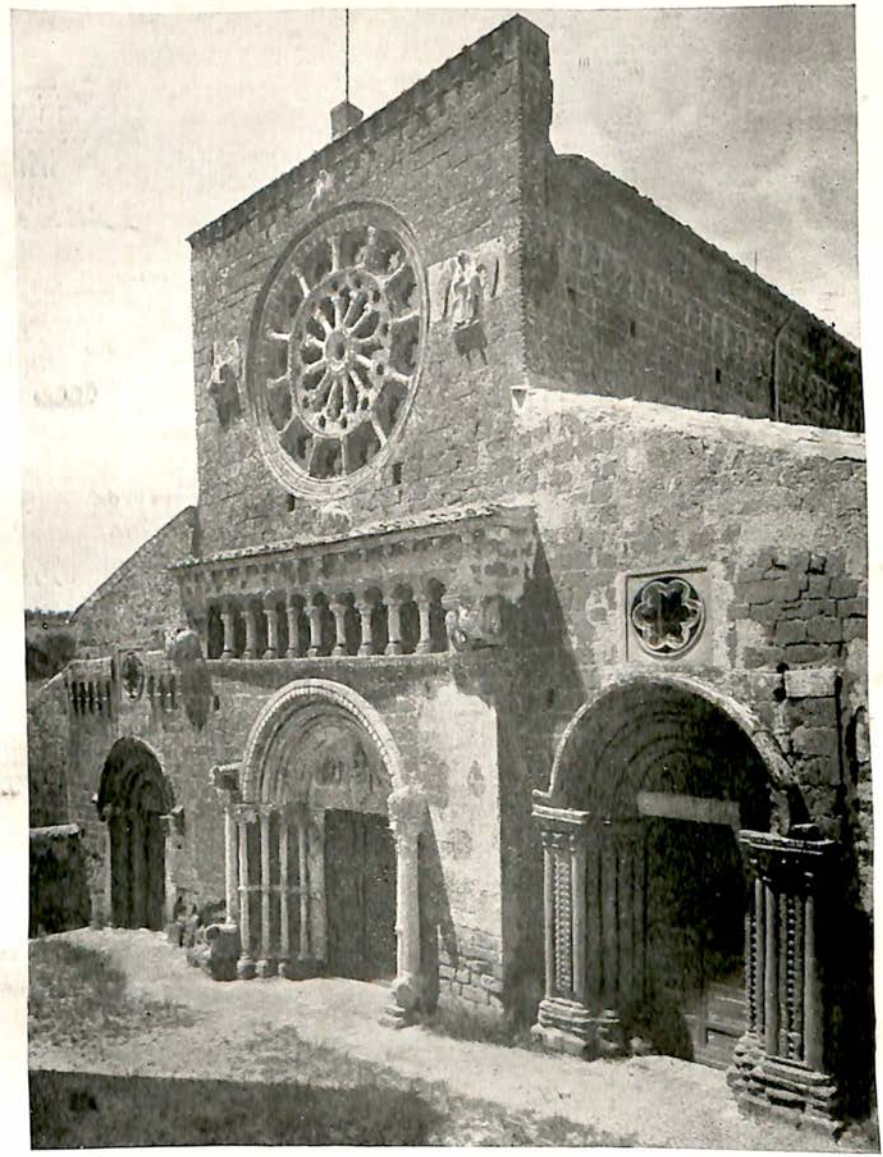
has some very beautiful white marble capitals with carved foliage as well as others that are characteristically Lombard and grotesque. The latter are attributed to the reign of Desiderius; the former were perhaps appropriated Roman or Byzantine work; but they *may* be 'Comacine,' *i.e.* Roman-Lombard. At Lucca, in S. Frediano (built originally by an Irish bishop *c.* 570), there are some very fine ancient or Roman-Lombard columns, and there is an apsidal colonnade with architraves instead of arches, which is perhaps Roman-Lombard. At Pavia the celebrated S. Pietro in Ciel d'oro, perhaps built by Agilulf or Theodelinda, was rebuilt or restored by Liutprand, who, as we have already heard, brought thither the bones of St. Augustine. Of the original edifice a few capitals and a part of the façade are extant. Other churches which possess relics of early Roman-Lombard architecture or sculpture are the ancient but newly rebuilt basilica of S. Abbondio near Como, S. Giusto and S. Martino (Fig. 41) at Lucca, the Pieve di Arliano near Lucca, the chapel of S. Maria della Valle at Cividale (*c.* 750), S. Fedele at Como, and S. Ambrogio at Milan, the *atrium* of which dates originally from *c.* 790.



LOMBARD WORK AT S. ABBONDIO, NEAR COMO

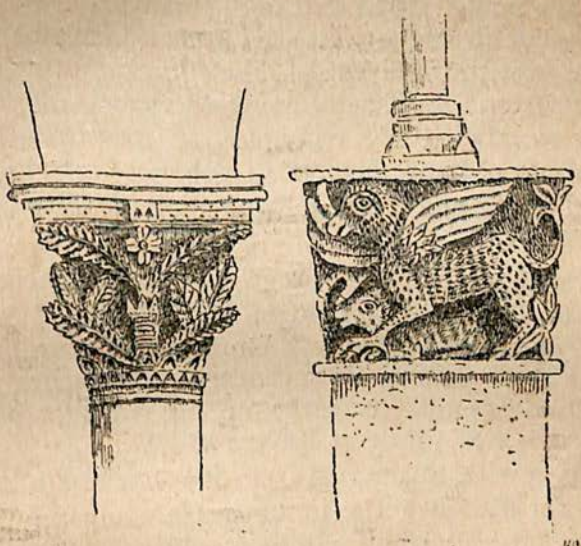
But by far the most complete and attractive relic of this Roman-Lombard period is to be found at Toscanella,[1] anciently Tuscania, a small but once strongly fortified town near Viterbo, in the south of Lombard Tuscia. Here there are two basilicas. That of S. Pietro was originally built in 628 (to receive the bones of three saints), but, as was so often the case with the earliest

[1] The diminutive form is due to the contempt of some Pope whom Tuscania had defied.



26. S. Maria Maggiore, Toscanella

Lombard churches, which were probably unskilfully erected, it was rebuilt—perhaps by the Comacine master Rodpert, already mentioned—in the reign of Liutprand (*c.* 740). From this period dates much of the very fine interior. Some of the columns and capitals are antique or else good imitations by



S. PIETRO, TOSCANELLA S. AMBROGIO, MILAN

Note the pilaster above the nave pier—' the first form of the great distinctive feature of Northern architecture—the vaulting shaft.' Such shafts are, according to Ruskin, petrified survivals of the timber uprights of the wooden churches of the North. ' The Lombards brought them into Italy in the seventh century and they remain to this day in S. Ambrogio of Milan and S. Michele of Pavia.'

Comacine or Roman craftsmen. Others, as the one depicted, are unmistakably Lombard, though not of a grotesque and barbarous character. The exterior is mainly later Romanesque, and it shows many characteristics of the style, such as the deeply recessed windows, the brick and marble arcades, and the zigzag ornament so common in Norman architecture. The very beautiful façade, with its magnificent rose window (Fig. 25), dates mostly from a reconstruction of about 1040; but the

splendid recessed portals are doubtless in part old Roman-Lombard originals. The other basilica, that of S. Maria Maggiore, was the earlier of the two, and was the bishop's seat till 650, but there is little or nothing surviving of the original building, which was entirely rebuilt about 800. Its façade is of about the same date as that of S. Pietro.

It seems very probable that the Roman-Lombard style of architecture was introduced by the Franks into countries north of the Alps. Especially along the great waterway of the Rhine we find early examples of Romanesque. The renowned Abbey of Lauresheim at Lorsch, not far from Worms, was founded at the end of the reign of Pipin the Short (*c.* 767), and was dedicated in the presence of Charles the Great in 774, the same year in which he transported the last Lombard king, Desiderius, to France. At Cologne the original of S. Maria im Capitol was most probably a church in Roman-Lombard style built in the eighth or ninth century. At Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) Charles built his cathedral, as we already know, after the model of S. Vitale at Ravenna.[1]

In connexion with this period (300–800) one should mention bell-towers, for although the innumerable campanili of Italy are mostly of later date and will be considered when we come to the subject of true Romanesque, some of those still existing were erected in the seventh or even perhaps in the sixth century. It may be remembered that in the Theoderic mosaics views are given of what seem to be intended to represent the chief buildings of Ravenna and of Classe, and that there is no sign of any campanile. It seems therefore likely that the ancient circular campanili of the cathedral, of S. Apollinare Nuovo, and of S. Apollinare in Classe were not built till about 600, or perhaps even a century later. Gregorovius tells us

[1] The splendid church at Trier (Trèves), on the Mosel, claims to be the oldest in Germany, but has been totally reconstructed. It stands on the remains of a Roman building which was used as a Christian church already in the fourth century. Burnt down about 550, it was later rebuilt—evidently in early Roman-Lombard style, for there are relics of arches and sculptures that resemble very closely those of Northern Italy in the age of Theodelinda. As reconstructed in the eleventh century the building is a fine specimen of German Romanesque, but is disfigured by steeples and modern restorations.

that the bell-tower of old St. Peter's in Rome was erected by Pope Stephen II about 755, and that it was the first campanile built (in Rome?). If the old drawing given on p. 295 is correct, this campanile was evidently square, as is also that of the Torcello cathedral, which may date from the ninth century. Probably—or almost certainly—some form of bell-tower existed long before the earliest extant campanile, for church bells were first used, it is said, at Nola, in Campania,[1] about the year 400. Large bells, however, were not in use till about 600. By 700 they were fairly common. They are mentioned by Bede.

[1] By the French bishop S. Paulinus, whose *festa* is still kept at Nola in June.

CHAPTER III

VENICE AND OTHER CITIES

WE have seen how at the beginning of the eighth century the cities under Byzantine supremacy were becoming very discontented. At Rome the Exarch had been obliged to hide under the Pope's bed to escape from an infuriated mob, and the atrocities committed at Ravenna by the Eastern Emperor Justinian II had excited great indignation and a general rising among the cities of the northern Exarchate and the Pentapolis. These rebellions had shaken to its foundations the Byzantine power in Italy, and we may now (about 730, when the iconoclastic quarrel had caused final cleavage between East and West) consider Rome and the Exarchate to have become practically autonomous. But the autonomy of the Exarchate was short-lived. It very soon fell into the power of the Lombards, who captured Ravenna. In 734, at the intercession of the Pope, the Venetians retook the city and handed it over again to the Empire—a proof, be it noted in passing, that Venice was already powerful and independent. Then, a few years later again (752), the Lombards under Astulf conquered the whole of that region of Italy, and thus put an end for ever to the Exarchate, except as a geographical denomination, under which the country figures in the Donations of Pipin and Charles the Great.

Several hundreds of years were yet to elapse before foreign domination should so far have passed away as to allow the rise of those Republics which played such an important part in the history of Italy; but even in the seventh century, amidst the general disintegration caused by the partial

27. Cathedral and S. Fosca, Torcello

conquest of the country by the Lombards, by the embitterment between Rome and Constantinople, and by the dissolution of Byzantine power in Italy, several of the greater cities had acquired some measure of self-rule. This was especially the case with Rome and Venice.

At Rome, in spite of the rapidly increasing power of the Popes, a republican spirit seems to have prevailed at this period, although the form of government was somewhat oligarchical.[1] The story of Rome in these ages has already entered largely into our narrative. It consists to a great extent of discords and tumults, political and ecclesiastical, which need not here be repeated, as they no longer have much importance, whereas what is permanently interesting, such as the personalities of Gregory the Great and the two Leos, has occupied a good deal of our attention, as also have various questions connected with Roman architecture. I shall therefore now turn to Venice, which affords the earliest and most striking example of an independent Italian city.

Centuries before the time of Attila the islands off the coast of Venetia had been frequented, and more or less permanently inhabited, by fisher-folk, and on some of them wealthy Romans had built their villas; for in early days the Veneti, or Heneti, harassed by the Celts, had put themselves under the protection of Rome, and when the north of Italy (*Gallia Cisalpina* —also called *Gallia Togata*, or 'Toga'd Gaul') was made a Roman province the Venetian territory, with its towns of Patavium (Padua), Aquileia, and Altinum, became an integral part of the Empire. In those early times, long before Venice existed, the islands now called Torcello and S. Giorgio Maggiore were often chosen by Roman patricians as suitable spots for summer residence, and the *litus* of Gradus (now the fashionable *lido* of Grado) was already, it seems, joined

[1] At this time Rome had its duke, who was in command of the army and shared the civil power with the nobles (*Optimates*). The papal authority grew up side by side with the oligarchical, or republican, and at times evidently almost superseded it, giving, as Villari says, a curious physiognomy to that which was in its real nature a commune.

to the mainland by a causeway and had its pastures and its vineyards. So when Attila swooped down on Venetia and sacked Aquileia the fugitives who flocked to Grado and to the islands and *lidi* of the lagunes found there something besides desolate mud-banks. There seem to have been twelve distinct settlements made by these refugees. Grado was chosen as a refuge by the Aquileians, Heraclea (which was at first the chief town of *Venetia maritima*, but was afterwards destroyed) was occupied by the people of Belluno, Torcello and Burano by those of Altinum, and Malamocco and Rivoalto (the Rialto) by the Paduans. In 466 the representatives of the settlements met at Grado and elected twelve Tribunes, one as chief magistrate for each community.[1]

How far Venetia came under the Gothic domination is uncertain. In Baduela's (Totila's) reign we hear of the Goths occupying it, but it is doubtful whether Theoderic ever made it a part of his dominions, although we find Cassiodorus, the minister of the Goth king and his successors, writing to the *Tribuni maritimorum* in the year 537 (or possibly an *Indictio* earlier, *i.e.* in 523) and urging them not to forget to transport by sea, or rather by the 'river scenery' of the lagunes, certain tributes of oil and wine from Istria to Ravenna. Whether this was requested in the way of business or demanded as a duty owed to the liege-lord Theoderic, or Vitiges, is not quite clear, but in spite of the somewhat domineering tone of the letter it affords a very early—perhaps the earliest—proof that the Tribunes of maritime Venetia were officially recognized and that the Confederacy enjoyed even at this early period at least a certain measure of self-rule. For this reason and for the sake of its graphic touches it may be well to give the following passages from it—in doing which I make some use of Mr. Hodgkin's translation (*Letters of Cassiodorus*, Book XII, ep. 24):

'We have given orders that Istria should send wine and oil, of which there are abundant crops this year, to the royal

[1] The so-called chair of Attila (Fig. 27) may have been the *sella curulis* of the Torcello Tribune.

residence at Ravenna. Do you, who possess numerous ships on the borders of the Province, show the same devotion in forwarding the stores which they do in supplying them. . . . This is added to your other advantages, that to you an alternative route is open, marked by perpetual safety and tranquillity; for when by raging winds the sea is closed, a way lies open to you through the most charming river scenery. Your keels, drawn by cables, fear no rough blasts; they touch the earth with pleasure and take no harm, however frequently they come in contact with it. Beholders from a distance, not seeing the channel of the stream, might fancy them moving through meadows. . . . It is a pleasure to recall the situation of your dwellings as I myself have seen them. Venetia, the high-extolled [a reference to the old name *Heneti*, which in Greek is somewhat like a word meaning 'praised'], formerly full of dwellings of the nobility, touches on the south Ravenna and the Po, while on the east it enjoys the delightful Ionian [Adriatic] shore and its alternating tides. Here after the manner of water-fowl you have fixed your home. Scattered amidst the wide expanse of waters are seen your dwelling-places, which nature indeed produced, but which are cemented by human labour into firm foundations; for, collected by twisted and knotted osier-work, the earth is turned into a solid mass which the ponderous surf on the shallow shore is unable to sweep away.' He then describes their wealth of fish and salt, and once more urges them to repair and hold ready their ships, 'which are tethered, like so many beasts of burden, to your walls.'

During and after the reconquest of Italy by the Byzantines the relations of *Venetia maritima* to the Eastern Empire were friendly; but they show no sign of vassalage. When in 538 Narses was sent from the East to co-operate with Belisarius in Italy, the Venetian islanders aided him to transport his troops by sea, and it is stated (though also denied) that in return he sent them Byzantine builders, who erected on the Rivoalto the basilica of S. Teodoro, that most ancient of the churches of Venice, which was demolished to make room

for St. Mark's when that saint's bones were brought from Alexandria in 828.

With the help of the Byzantines the Venetian confederacy was for a long time able to defend itself against the Lombards, and it possessed during this period a considerable amount of independence and naval power.[1] Its population also was greatly increased by fugitives from the mainland cities,[2] and a great advantage (for such it really was politically) accrued to the islanders about the year 580 through the flight of the Patriarch of Aquileia to Grado; for thus the confederacy obtained an ecclesiastical Head recognized by the Pope. In 584 a kind of Parliament was constituted, consisting of specially elected Tribunes (*Tribuni majores*).

But among these island communes internal quarrels broke out, and they were constantly threatened by the Lombard dukes of Friuli. They therefore determined to consolidate themselves into a state. In the year 697 the Patriarch—apparently without the sanction of Emperor or Exarch—summoned a Parliament at Heraclea, and a supreme Head of the State was elected—the first of those Doges who ruled the Venetians almost uninterruptedly for thirteen centuries. The official seat of the Doges was at first Heraclea. They were elected for life and were allowed almost regal state and authority. All public office depended on them. In their hands lay the investiture of bishops and patriarchs, whose appointment they could veto. They could convoke or dissolve at will the ecclesiastical synods and the public assembly, or Parliament—the *Arengo*, as it was called—which remained until its final dissolution in 1423 the one important democratic element in the Venetian government.

The first Doge of maritime Venetia was (to use henceforth

[1] When Longinus, Narses' successor, visited the islands to demand their aid as subjects of the Emperor, they refused to recognize the claim, but sent envoys with Longinus to Constantinople, and in return for important trading privileges accepted as an empty form the suzerainty of the Emperor.

[2] One of these, Altinum, the inhabitants are said to have left on account of an augury that recalls Attila and Aquileia—the sight of doves and other birds leaving the city and carrying with them their young.

28. Cathedral of Grado

Italian names) Paoluccio Anafesto. He was slain in a party broil, and followed by Marcello, his *Magister militum.* In the reign of the third Doge, Orso, the Lombards, as we have already heard, made themselves masters of the Exarchate and took Ravenna. The Byzantine Exarch fled for refuge to the Venetian islands, and, supported by letters from Pope Gregory III, persuaded the Doge and the *Arengo* to recover Ravenna for the Empire. This bold undertaking was successfully carried out (734), which is a proof that the Venetians already possessed not only a fleet powerful enough to capture the port, Classe, but also land forces efficient enough to take the strongly fortified city itself.[1]

But internal discord was again threatening the young state. The pro-Byzantine faction succeeded in murdering Doge Orso, who was the head of the nationalist party, and for five years (737–41) the title of Doge was in abeyance, the government being carried on by annual *Magistri militum* under the supreme control of the Exarch of Ravenna. Then a counter-revolution set on the throne the son of Orso, Diodato, the unfortunate *Magister* being *abbacinato*—blinded by the red-hot brazen basin in the cruel Byzantine fashion. The new Doge was elected, not as usual at Heraclea, but at Malamocco,[2] which was now (742) made the ducal residence.

Under Astulf (*c.* 752) the Lombards, as we have seen, conquered the whole of the Venetian mainland and put an end to the Byzantine Exarchate; but they evidently did not forcibly subdue the *maritime* Venetians, whom we find on terms of friendly and independent alliance with them. Then, when Pipin and his Franks came, and still more when Charles captured Pavia and King Desiderius and put an end to the Lombard power, the Venetians were obliged to adopt another policy. At that crisis they were guided by the wise and firm rule of Doge Galbaio, and it seems (if we may believe an old inscription on a plate of lead that may be seen in the British

[1] For this exploit Doge Orso received from the Emperor the title 'Hypatos' (equivalent to 'Highness').

[2] Old Malamocco, now sunk in the waves, was somewhere (uncertain where) on the present channel through the Lido called *Il porto di Malamocco.*

Museum) that twenty-four Venetian galleys ascended the Po and the Ticino to aid Charles in besieging Pavia, and that the captive Lombard king was guarded for a time by Venetians.

But this Frankish policy led to a revival of internal discords, and difficulties with the Franks themselves also arose through the expulsion of Venetians from Ravenna and Pentapolis on account of their addiction to the slave trade (which Charles had abolished by law). Then feuds between Doge and Patriarch and between Heraclea, Jesolo, and other towns of the Venetian Confederacy ere long ended in the murder of the Patriarch, the total destruction of both Heraclea and Jesolo, the exile of Doge Galbaio and his son, whom he had associated with himself as Doge-apparent, and the election of a Frank partisan named Obelerio. But the rival faction, which favoured Byzantine suzerainty and was composed largely of the now homeless Heracleans, gained in turn the upper hand, and brought about an alliance with the Eastern Emperor. This naturally determined the Frank monarch to put an end to the constant troubles caused him by the restless and unsubmissive islanders. In order to conquer and annex them he caused his son Pipin, the king of Italy, to attack their strongholds with a powerful army and fleet. Then Doge Obelerio, who advised submission, was deposed by the infuriated Venetians, and a Heraclean named Agnello Partecipazio (to give him the later, Italian, form of his name) was elected, not as Doge, but as military commandant. The Franks soon captured Grado, Brondolo, and Chioggia. They then attacked the *lidi* of Pellestrina and Malamocco, and after much fierce fighting they succeeded in capturing Malamocco itself; but meanwhile the islanders had retreated and established their headquarters on the Rivoalto, and after six months of vain attempts to dislodge them, defeated by their resistance, by the labyrinthine intricacies of the shallow lagunes, and by the malarial heats of autumn, Pipin abandoned the enterprise and withdrew. He died shortly afterwards at Milan (where his tomb may be seen in S. Ambrogio), and Charles

deemed it wise to recognize maritime Venetia as a free state under the protectorate of the Eastern Empire.

In 811 Agnello Partecipazio (called Particiaco by some writers) was elected Doge, and in 813, or possibly before, he transferred the seat of government to the Rivoalto, or Rialto; and the town on the banks of this 'Deep Stream' was henceforth known by the name Venetia, or Venezia, and recognized as the centre of the Venetian state. Here Partecipazio, the eleventh Doge of the Venetian Confederacy and the first Doge who ruled at Venice, was given a residence that stood on the site now occupied by the Ducal Palace.

Of other Italian cities, such as Florence, Pisa, Pavia, Milan, Monza, Genoa, etc., we have only rare and scanty notices in early chroniclers. Here and there mention has been made of them in the preceding pages, and in view of the immensity of the subject of this volume I must hope that these passages, to which reference is supplied by the Index, will suffice.

Naples however claims a few observations. It boasts of course a lineage very much longer than that of Venice—longer even than that of Rome—for it is said to have been founded, under the name Parthenope, by the Greeks of Cyme (Cumae) about 900 B.C. Its early history does not however demand our attention, for the first occasion on which the city played any important part in Italian history was in 535 A.D., when the Goths defended it obstinately against Belisarius, until he took it by a ruse almost as ingenious as that of the wooden horse, namely by sending a body of 600 men creeping through the galleries of aqueducts (precursors of the great Serino aqueduct), by which means they gained entry into the city and opened the gates. Eight years later Naples was recaptured by the Goths under Baduela. After the battle on Mount Vesuvius and the death of Theia (553) it of course fell again into the hands of the Byzantines; and it will be remembered that Narses took up his residence there in 567, after he had been deprived of his command.

Naples was not conquered by the Lombards. It was closely beleaguered by the Duke of Benevento at the time (581) when

the Lombards devastated Campania and sacked the convent of Monte Cassino; but it resisted successfully, depending, like other maritime cities of South Italy, on the aid of the Byzantine fleet, and through the seventh century and the first half of the eighth, although neglected by the Emperors, who were much occupied by the Saracens in Sicily, it remained loyal, being governed by Byzantine Judges and Commandants and later by Byzantine Dukes, and taking no part in the rebellion of Ravenna and the Pentapolis against Byzantine supremacy. Finally however, about 760, the Neapolitan Duke Stephen II declared the city independent. The official language was changed from Greek to Latin; the coins (except in some cases, where the old type was kept) bore the effigy of St. Januarius instead of that of the Emperor; the son of Duke Stephen was associated with his father in the government, by which act a kind of dynastic system was introduced; and, lastly, the Duke himself, having become a widower, conceived the brilliant idea of combining in his own person the supreme civil and ecclesiastical offices, and after receiving the tonsure at Rome was consecrated Bishop of Naples. Under successive Dukes the city defended itself gallantly against the Saracens and held out for some time against the Normans; but in 1134, after a long and heroic resistance, it was captured by Roger, the self-made king of Sicily, and its self-rule came to an end.

CHAPTER IV

CHARLES THE GREAT IN ROME

Pipin the Short crowned	751	Zacharias	
		Stephen II (Paul I)	752
Charles succeeds (with Carlmann)	768	Stephen III	768
Charles sole king	771	Hadrian I	772
1st visit to Rome			
April (Easter)	774		
2nd visit			
April (Easter)	781		
3rd visit			
Easter	787		
4th visit			
Christmas	800	Leo III	795

CHARLES visited Rome three times before 800. The first occasion was in 774, nearly twenty-seven years before his coronation. Ever since the early autumn of 773 he had been besieging Desiderius in Pavia, and as the siege seemed likely to last a considerable time longer he determined to celebrate the festival of Easter (April 2) in Rome, where he would be able to discuss matters of grave moment with Pope Hadrian. This first visit of the Frank monarch to the city which had been the metropolis of the ancient and was soon to be the capital of the new Roman Empire is of special importance on account of the question of the so-called Donations. For this reason, and because the meeting of the king and the Pope was attended by striking and picturesque circumstances and connects itself with some points of artistic interest, I shall describe the episode somewhat fully [1] and then add some remarks on the subject of these Donations.

[1] I take the main facts from the *Liber Pontificalis* (ed. Duchesne), which gives the one authentic account. Gibbon, Gregorovius, Villari, and others copy it closely.

It will be remembered that on his accession in 772 Pope Hadrian had vainly endeavoured to come to terms with the Lombard king, Desiderius, who was deeply incensed at the insulting rejection of his daughter Desiderata by Charles and had tried to persuade the Pope to consecrate Carlmann's fugitive son as the legitimate king of the Franks. This demand Hadrian refused to fulfil, showing himself, says the old chronicler, 'as unbending as adamant.' Thereupon Desiderius not only refused to give over other Exarchate cities, but seized Faenza and Ferrara, threatened Ravenna, and suddenly marched southwards against Rome.

Then,

quando 'l dente longobardo morse
La santa Chiesa, sotto alle sue ali
Carlo magno, vincendo, la soccorse,[1]

for like an eagle he came sweeping down from the Alps, and the Lombard king had scarce time to hurry northwards again and shut himself up in Pavia. The city was soon invested by the Frank army, but Pavia was strongly fortified and well provisioned, and after six months of ineffectual siege Charles determined, as has been said, to visit Rome, and spend Easter there. He crossed the Apennines and traversed Tuscany by the Via Clodia at the head of a large retinue.

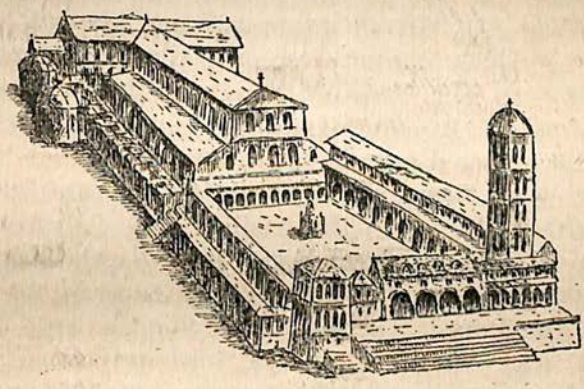
On hearing of his approach Pope Hadrian determined to receive him with the same honours that used to be paid to the Byzantine Exarch whenever he visited the old capital of the Empire. He therefore sent a deputation of nobles and magistrates to welcome him and to hand over to him, as a token of homage, the banner of the city.[2] These met the Frank monarch near Lake Sabatinus, about thirty Roman miles from the city, *in loco qui vocatur Nobas.*[3] When the regal

[1] Dante, *Par.* vi, 94. The *ali* (wings) are those of the Imperial Eagle—in whose constellated form in the sixth heaven (that of the planet Jupiter) Constantine the Great's spirit, who is here speaking, is one of the five stars that compose the eye. Both Charles and his paladin Orlando are put by Dante into heaven (in the fiery cross of Mars) as being Warriors of the Cross.

[2] See p. 243 *n.*

[3] Perhaps the ruins near Trevignano, on the north side of Lago di Bracciano, may be relics of this place, called *Ad novas* (*domûs ?*). Probably it was a

cavalcade with its escort of Frankish warriors and Roman dignitaries had reached the Pons Milvius (that bridge which we know so well in connexion with Constantine and Maxentius) and had passed over the Tiber, they found the Flaminian road for a mile from the city gate lined with a great multitude, and were met by a procession of students from all the military and civil schools of Rome, 'bearing palm and olive branches, and



ANCIENT BASILICA OF ST. PETER AT ROME
From an old drawing

singing songs of praise,' while the clergy carried *venerandas cruces, id est signa*—evidently standards like the *labarum*.

On beholding the approach of the sacred standards Charles dismounts and proceeds on foot to the basilica of St. Peter, where standing aloft *super grados* [*sic*] *juxta fores ecclesiae* Pope Hadrian is awaiting him. This great marble staircase leading up to the basilica Charles now ascends on his knees, kissing each step (*omnes grados singillatim deosculatus*), until he reaches Hadrian, who raises and kisses him. Then hand in hand the *sanctissimus papa* and the *excellentissimus Francorum rex* enter the *venerandam aulam*, while a vast quire of

mutatio (posting relay house) whence one struck the *diverticulum* (cross-road) between the Clodian and Cassian roads and thus reached the Via Flaminia. But I prefer to think that they kept to the Clodia, which passed south of Sabatinus and joined the Via Flaminia near the Milvian Bridge.

clerics chants the words *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.* They first traversed the white marble pavement of the great court, amidst which stood the Pilgrims' Fountain, surmounted by the colossal pine-cone, and then passing into the basilica itself they prostrated themselves before the high altar, in front of the 'Confessio'—the latticed opening of the shaft communicating with the sepulchre of the saint—and 'glorified the Divine Power for having granted them victory [over the Lombards] *per interventionum suffragia ejusdem principis apostolorum.*' Then, having descended into the crypt, in the very presence of the body of St. Peter they and all their nobles and prelates exchanged vows of mutual fidelity.

Charles had begged permission to offer his orisons in other great churches of Rome, so they went on the same afternoon (Holy Saturday of 774) to the basilica of S. Salvatore, later S. Giovanni in Laterano, where the Pope baptized adults—a rite still performed on this day in the Lateran Baptistery, but not by the Pope! On the Easter Sunday, after a grand *levée*, Mass was celebrated in the ancient mother church, S. Maria Maggiore—*in ecclesia sanctae Dei Genctricis ad Praesepe* [1]—and a great banquet was held in the Lateran. On the fourth day of Easter week (*quarta feria*) the momentous ceremony of the Donation took place in St. Peter's, where Hadrian 'entreated and with paternal affection exhorted' the king to fulfil in every particular (*ut adimpleret in omnibus*) the promise made by his father Pipin and also by himself and his brother Carlmann and all the Frank nobles. Then Charles bade this charter of King Pipin to be read to him, and, having heard it, that *praeexcellentissimus et revera christianissimus rex Francorum,* of his own free will, *bono et libenti animo,* declared his full satisfaction with every item (as did also all his nobles) and bade another *promissio* to be drawn up, confirming and extending the older Donation. This he signed *propria manu* (with difficulty perhaps, as he is said by his biographer

[1] Anciently called 'S. M. ad Nives,' because a fall of snow determined the exact limits of its site; or 'ad Praesepe,' because of its supposed possession of five boards of the Manger of Bethlehem.

Einhart to have first tried to learn to write when advanced in years), and caused it to be signed by all his nobles, who bound themselves *sub terribili sacramento* to fulfil all its conditions. He also had it copied. Of these copies he seems to have taken one or two with him, and one was hung up in the 'Confessio' of St. Peter—if we may believe the writer of Hadrian's life in the *Pontifical Book*.

The Frank monarch remained in Rome about two months. The siege of Pavia, in which city King Desiderius was shut up, was now drawing to an end, and Charles, having hastened northwards, was just in time to be present at the surrender.

His other visits to Rome and his coronation have been described elsewhere. At the time of his coronation he was an elderly man of fifty-eight, whereas in picturing to ourselves this visit that I have been describing we should remember that Charles was at that time only thirty-two years of age, and a man of imposing presence, his stature having been, according to Einhart, seven times the length of his foot—that is, well over six feet. His long flaxen hair and moustache, described by Einhart as 'beautiful in their fairness,' are not easily perceptible on his coins (see p. 450) or on the Triclinium mosaic (p. 243).

St. Peter's Basilica

In connexion with the visits of Charles the Great to Rome it may be interesting to hear a little more about the old basilica of St. Peter.

The quarter in which St. Peter's stands, known in Raffael's day,[1] and still known, as the Borgo (suburb), was called in classical times the Ager Vaticanus, probably from some ancient Etruscan village that occupied the site. Lying in a marshy bend of the river, it was malarious, and had as yet not been

[1] I refer to the fresco *L'incendio del Borgo*. The word is of Northern origin (*burg*, *burgh*) and possibly in Rome was first used (*c.* 700) to denote the shingle-roofed inflammable quarters (*scandalicia*) of English, Saxons, and other Northmen who founded *scholae* in this part of the city. Hence in Italian it has come to mean a suburb. The Borgo was walled and fortified by Leo IV (*c.* 852) and was called the Civitas Leonina.

included in the city walls—not even in those of Aurelian (*c.* A.D. 270). Here Caligula made a great race-ground (Circus) and amphitheatre, which under Nero became notorious for the terrible martyrdoms of Christians of which we read in Tacitus. Probably in this amphitheatre—it is said, between the two *metae*—or, far less probably, on the slope of the Janiculum where now S. Pietro in Montorio stands, the apostle was crucified. His body was removed to a catacomb on the Appian Way, but was afterwards brought back to the Vatican Hill. Over this last grave the fifth Pope, Anacletus—who had been ordained presbyter by St. Peter himself—erected (says the *Liber*) a memorial chapel. More than two centuries later (306) Constantine and Silvester founded on the spot a basilica, the Emperor himself, it is said, beginning the work by digging out and carrying away some hodfuls of earth.

This basilica, much altered in parts, existed until about 1500–10, when it had to make room for the new St. Peter's designed by Bramante, whose plans, as all know, were carried out with many alterations by Raffael, Michelangelo, and many other architects. But the work of demolition evidently went on slowly and there is every probability that when Raffael first visited Rome in 1508 the façade of the old basilica, which he has depicted in his *Incendio del Borgo*, and the great columns of the nave, which we see in the background of the *Donation of Constantine* (Fig. 29), were still standing. Besides these frescos and a picture in the crypt of St. Peter's we have the well-known ground-plan by Alfarano (1591), which is given by Rossi and by the Abbé Duchesne with very full details. The small reconstruction given on p. 295 is founded on this ground-plan.

The basilica, which was flanked by many chapels, oratories, sanctuaries, and other buildings not given in the sketch, had in front of it to the east (for St. Peter's has unorthodox orientation) a very large cloistered *atrium*, or *quadriportus*, the other sides of which consisted of various edifices, including the campanile with three bells erected *c.* 755 by Pope Stephen II. This *atrium*, 'il Paradiso,' as it was called, was paved with

white marble, and in its midst was a fountain, erected *c.* 370 by Pope Damasus for the use of pilgrims, and *c.* 498 furnished by Pope Symmachus with a metal roof, on which he placed the huge bronze pine-cone which once stood, perhaps, on the top of the Pantheon, or Hadrian's Mole, and which now stands in the Giardino della Pigna of the Vatican. This is the pine-cone which Dante mentions when he is describing one of the giants that 'turreted' the marge of the pit of Hell:

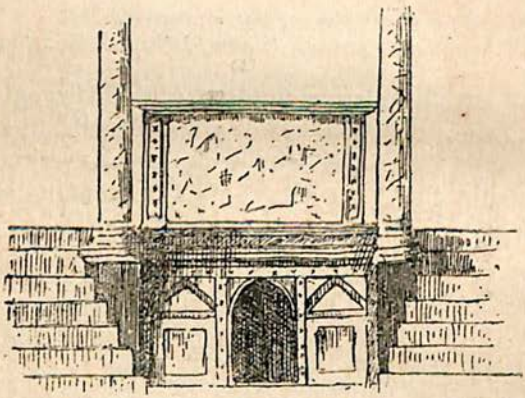
La faccia sua mi parea lunga e grossa
Come la pina di San Pietro a Roma.

The roof of the church was made of gilded tiles, given by Pope Honorius (*c.* 625). Its façade was adorned with mosaics. Over the portal, says the Abbé Duchesne, were originally depicted the Saviour and St. Peter, to whom Constantine was pointing out (or offering a model of ?) the church. In Raffael's *Incendio* one may observe faint traces of mosaics on the building. These later mosaics are said to have consisted of three zones: in the gable were Christ and the Virgin, between and beside the upper windows the four Evangelists, and between the lower windows figures of the four-and-twenty Elders holding up their golden crowns towards the Saviour. The nave of the basilica was flanked on each side by two aisles. Ninety-six columns,[1] many taken from ancient buildings, such as the amphitheatre of Nero, separated the aisles and supported the clerestory, which, as well as the apse, was adorned with mosaic work. Precious marbles, splendid curtains of brocade, golden and silver and bronzen candelabras and lamps and altars and statues enriched the whole of the interior.

Towards the west end the nave and the aisles were crossed by a short transept, beyond which rose an elevated presbytery —such as one knows in the Florentine S. Miniato, S. Giorgio at Rome, and other churches. To reach the presbytery one ascended, to the right or to the left of the high altar,

[1] Some of these details are given by St. Gregory of Tours (the patron of St. Martin) from the accounts brought home by a deacon of his who had visited Rome *c.* 590.

seven steps of red porphyry. Immediately below the high altar was the crypt, containing the sepulchres of St. Peter and St. Paul, and the *fenestella confessionis* was below the altar,[1] between the two flights of porphyry steps—as may be seen in Raffael's fresco in which Leo III (or rather Leo X!) is depicted taking his oath before Charles the Great. This 'window of the Confession' was a grating with an aperture by which one could look down a perpendicular



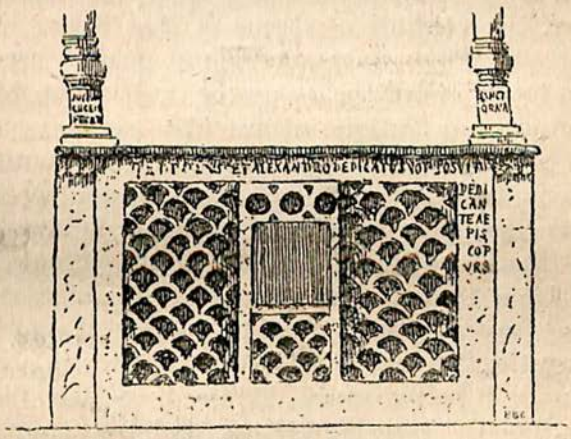
PRESBYTERY STEPS AND 'CONFESSIO,' S. GIORGIO IN VELABRO

shaft and see the saint's tomb. St. Gregory of Tours relates what his deacon saw at St. Peter's basilica, and speaks of a '*parvula fenestella*, the lattice of which having been opened, one could insert one's head [*immisso introrsum capite*] and thus give utterance to one's supplications.' The shaft and sepulchre at St. Peter's got choked up and buried in rubbish probably (says Duchesne) after the Saracen invasion of 846. Some seven and a half centuries later (1594), while foundations were being excavated, the original tomb seems to have again come to view, and a silver sarcophagus and a golden cross were, it is said, actually seen through an aperture by

[1] See illustrations. In one *Confessio* is the (supposed) head of our English St. George. The catacomb altar (probably from about 320) has the grating and window in its front side, as the presbytery was not elevated.

Pope Clement VIII; but he ordered all to be walled up again.

As those know who have visited the *Grotte nuove* in St. Peter's, the 'Confession' is now some ten feet under the pavement of the present cathedral, overhung by Michelangelo's mighty dome. The question of the genuineness of the relics and the sarcophagi of St. Peter and St. Paul (for also St. Paul's body is stated to have been brought here from the catacombs



'CONFESSIO' IN THE ORATORY OF S. ALESSANDRO'S CATACOMB, ROME

of the Appian Way and the sarcophagus to have been seen in course of the reconstructions in the sixteenth century) need not here be discussed; but I may add that when the Saracens in 846 plundered S. Pietro and S. Paolo (both still outside the walls) they cast forth, says Anastasius, the writer of this part of the *Pontifical Book*, the contents of the great bronze (silver ?) sarcophagus of St. Peter and 'devastated the sepulchre of St. Paul, which was in his basilica near the Appian Way.'

THE 'DONATIONS'

On the fifth day of his first visit to Rome, as we saw, Charles caused to be publicly read to him in St. Peter's basilica the Donation of Pipin; and this Donation, transcribed anew

and enlarged in some particulars, was formally confirmed by him and furnished with his signature as well as the signatures of his chief nobles and ecclesiastical dignitaries.

But there existed—though Charles was apparently not informed of the fact—what purported to be a much older charter of similar character, namely the so-called Donation of Constantine. The pious falsehood was perhaps first devised by Stephen II when he was on his famous visit to King Pipin at Paris in 754. If so, he doubtless urged the existence of the legend and the possible existence of the charter itself when entreating the Frank monarch for aid against the ravening 'Lombard tooth.' But the document itself—probably a fabrication imitating an antique manuscript—seems to have been concocted somewhat later, perhaps in Paul's pontificate, by some clever papal notary. Pope Hadrian doubtless knew of its existence, but, knowing also its origin, he did not venture to show it to Charles (who, by the way, probably could not read) when the Pipin Donation was recited to the king at Rome in 774. Three years later, however, finding it impossible to assert his authority in the 'donated' territories north of the Apennines, and being much harassed by the hostility of Ravenna, Spoleto, and Benevento, and by the rebellion of Tarracina and other towns, Hadrian was compelled once more to appeal to Charles for aid—and on this occasion (777) the Constantine Donation, which some centuries later achieved such notoriety,[1] was for the first time openly and officially cited, Hadrian entreating Charles to 'become a new Constantine.' Its value as a historical document does not of course consist in the legends that it preserves, but in the fact that, as Bryce says, 'although a portentous falsehood, it is the most unimpeachable evidence of the thoughts and beliefs of the priesthood which framed it.'

Let us now look a little closer into the question of this fabulous Donation of Constantine before considering the more historical Pipin Donation and its confirmation by Charles.

[1] Fig. 29 shows how long the Popes fostered the lie. In this picture Constantine presents a figure symbolical of Rome.

CHARLES THE GREAT IN ROME

(1) The Constantine Donation

According to an old tale which first appears in a *Vita S. Silvestri* of perhaps about the year 490, as well as in Greek and Syriac versions, and is briefly touched upon by the writer (about 510) of Silvester's life in the *Liber Pontificalis*, Constantine was attacked by leprosy and was advised by his physicians to bathe in children's blood. Three thousand little innocents were to be slaughtered for this purpose, but the lamentations and entreaties of the mothers so moved Constantine's pity that he renounced the prescribed cure. He was then visited in a vision of night by St. Peter and St. Paul, who praised him and said: 'Seek for Silvester, the Bishop of Rome, who is in hiding in the mountains, and he shall show thee a fount in which when thrice washed thou shalt be cleansed.' And Constantine sent soldiers, who found Silvester hiding near the summit of Syraptim ('within Soracte,' says Dante, as also the *Liber*), and the saint baptized him and he came forth from the font cleansed of his leprosy. Then he decreed that Christ alone should be adored in all the Empire, and that the Bishop of Rome should be the chief over all the bishops of Christendom (*ut in toto orbe sacerdotes pontificem Romanum caput habeant*). On the eighth day he visited the 'Confessio' of St. Peter's tomb and with his own hands dug out some hodfuls for the foundation of a new basilica and laid its first stone. The next day he founded his palace and a new basilica on the Lateran.

Whatever we may think of the rest of the story, the baptism of Constantine in the Lateran Baptistery, though it is depicted by Raffael in a celebrated fresco and described by Chaucer in his *Confessio Amantis*, and although a full description is given in the *Liber* of the splendid porphyry font presented by Constantine for the ceremony, is certainly legendary—for he was not baptized till shortly before his death; and although it is possible that he may have given over to Bishop Silvester the Lateran palace and a certain amount of land, and may have granted the Church and the Roman Bishop various

privileges and patrimonies, there is every reason to believe that no sovran rights of any kind were conceded by Constantine—nor, indeed, as we shall see, by Charles the Great. And yet the forged document asserted—and still asserts, for versions of it still exist—that the regal edict contained the following passages:[1] '*We, together with our Satraps and the whole Senate and Nobles and People, deem it desirable that even as St. Peter was on earth the Vicar of God, so also the Pontiffs, his vicegerents, should receive from us and from our Empire power and principality greater than belongs to us . . . and we decree that higher than our terrestrial throne the most sacred seat of St. Peter shall be gloriously exalted. . . . We hand over and relinquish to the most blessed Pontiff and universal Pope* [a title not used till two centuries later!] *Silvester our palace, the city of Rome, and all the provinces, places, and cities of Italy and the western regions, and we ordain that they shall be governed by him and his successors and shall remain under the authority of the holy Roman Church.*'

It is scarcely credible that such a document could have ever been seriously put forward as a title-deed even by the most shameless claimant or advocate of the Temporal Power. One would have thought that its wild and impudent extravagance would have met with nothing but incredulous contempt. But among papal adherents the legend was long accepted. Dante himself did not doubt the genuineness of the Gift, though he bitterly lamented 'the evil fruit of what was done with good intention.' 'Ah, Constantine,' he exclaimed,

> Of how much ill was cause,
> Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
> That the first wealthy Pope received of thee![2]

However, before the age of Ariosto the Donation had become for flippant minds a subject of ridicule. In *Orlando Furioso* the Paladin Astolfo finds the papal domains in the Moon:

> Then passed he to a flowery mountain green,
> Which once smelt sweet, now stinks as odiously;

[1] See Hodgkin's *Italy and her Invaders*, vol. vii, and *Liber Pontificalis*, splendidly edited by the Abbé Duchesne.

[2] *Par.* xx, 56, and *Inf.* xix, 115 (transl. by Milton).

29. The Donation of Constantine to Silvester

This was that gift (if you the truth will have)
That Constantine to good Sylvestro gave.[1]

And the claims made by the Popes on the strength of Pipin's Donation as confirmed by Charles were, as we shall see, scarcely less impudent.

(2) The Donation of Pipin and Charles

We have seen how Pipin, father of Charles the Great, in the year 751 assumed the royal title on the advice of Pope Zacharias, who commissioned St. Boniface, the English Apostle of Germany, to crown him, and how the successor of Zacharias, Pope Stephen II, finding his appeals to Astulf of no avail, crossed the Alps and during the first six months of 754 was the guest of the Frank king at the abbey of St. Denys, near Paris. We have also seen how Pipin made him the explicit promise 'to restore the cities of the Exarchate and the other places and rights' which had been appropriated by the Lombards; and this promise he is said to have solemnly renewed and ratified (perhaps in writing) in the presence of an assembly of his nobles held at Quierzy (called Carisiacus in the *Liber*), near Laon.[2] Stephen then crowned Pipin in the church of St. Denys—this second coronation being probably the confirmation of his title as hereditary monarch—and a short time after the ceremony he accompanied the king and his army to Italy, where the recalcitrant Astulf was obliged to surrender, and promised restoration of all his robberies.

But as soon as Pipin had recrossed the Alps the wily Lombard refused to keep his word, and even (as happened later in the case of Desiderius and Hadrian) threatened Rome itself. Many letters are now exchanged between Pipin and Stephen—the appeals of the Pope becoming more and more pitiful, till at last the Frank king returns and exacts from Astulf the cession of all the territories in question. Hereupon the keys of all the ceded cities (some twenty in number) are given over

[1] *Orl. Fur.* xxxiv, 80 (transl. by Milton).

[2] The *Liber* says that the princes Charles and Carlmann joined their father in 'making this promise' at Carisiacus (i, 498).

to the Pope, together with a formal act of Donation 'to God's Apostle, to his Vicar, the most holy Pope, and to all his successors.' This Donation, together with the keys, was placed in the 'Confessio' of St. Peter's at Rome, and was, it is asserted, the same document which was read to and confirmed by Charles in 774. The original manuscript has not survived, nor has any one of the copies that Charles is said to have ordered to be made; but we need not doubt that it and they actually existed, for we have the testimony of the writer of Hadrian's life in the *Liber*, who was apparently present at the ceremony and saw the copy of the charter that was hung up in the 'Confessio' of St. Peter's tomb.[1]

It is, however, very difficult to feel any certainty as regards the contents of the newly confirmed Donation; and still more difficult is it to feel sure of the exact interpretation of what is cited from it by the biographer of Hadrian in the *Pontifical Book*. The new promise (*alia promissio*) of Charles was probably on the same lines as Pipin's Quierzy charter (*ad instar anteriοris*, says the *Liber*); but that is not a question of so much importance, for in any case the promise of Charles was valid enough and needed no precedent. The really important matter is to feel sure about three other points. Firstly, is the *Pontifical Book* trustworthy as regards the cities and territories ceded, or does the writer only intimate what papal avarice and ambition claimed? Secondly, *to whom* was the territory ceded? Thirdly, were these cities and territories merely recognized as *patrimonies*, *i.e.* as containing buildings and estates which were admittedly Church property, and from which the ecclesiastical authorities might legally exact Church dues; or were they handed over with sovran rights, thus being alienated from the dominions of the Frank king (and the new Empire) and forming not so much an *imperium in imperio* as actually a separate and independent kingdom?

To these three questions I think we may answer that if the

[1] I fully accept Abbé Duchesne's conviction that this life of Hadrian is a contemporary document. For the fictitious Donation of Louis the Pious, said to be a copy of Pipin's, see p. 314.

amount of territory ceded by Pipin and Charles was actually what the *Liber* states, it included Corsica, Lunigiana, Parma, Mantua, Reggio, *universum Exarchatum Ravennatium, provincias Venetiarum et Istriae, necnon et cunctum ducatum Spoletinum et Beneventinum*—in fact, much the same as 'all the provinces, places, and cities of Italy' that figure in the forged Constantine Donation. Now if all this was given over to the Church or the Pope with sovran rights, and if the Frank king really intended (as Constantine's 'Donation' phrases it) that the most sacred seat of St. Peter should be gloriously exalted above all terrestrial thrones, one may well ask what Charles meant to keep for himself south of the Alps! But that Charles—the *rex Longobardorum*—meant to keep all—or very nearly all—his new Italian dominions is clear enough, and that he merely undertook to defend the interests of the Church as regards its private property, its revenues and ecclesiastical privileges, in these 'donated' territories seems very likely indeed. Only a few years after his 'Donation' we find him acting as if he alone were the liege-lord of all Italy—except possibly Rome and the Roman duchy—and that this was allowed by the Pope himself is graphically illustrated by the fact that at the same time (*c.* 777) as Hadrian was quoting Constantine's Donation to prove his claims to vast domains in North Italy he was obliged to beg leave from Charles before he ventured to cut down in the Spoletan hills a few trees which he wanted in order to repair the roof of St. Peter's basilica. And if it be objected that on his later visits to Rome, in 781 and 787, Charles 'renewed his concessions,' it may be answered that on these occasions he did nothing to show that he conceded any sovran rights to the Pope, even allowing that he asked him to crown the young Pipin as King of Italy, a fact that was doubtless interpreted by Hadrian as an acknowledgment of his sovranty in Italy. The fact is that Charles had long ago judged Hadrian to be entirely incapable of asserting any temporal authority north of the Apennines. The 'renewed concessions' merely amounted to certain extensions of the Roman duchy, which was now allowed

to include the fractious little town of Tuscania—or Toscanella —of which we have spoken in another chapter.

As regards our second question—*to whom* was the territory ceded?—it is instructive, and somewhat amusing, to remark how Pope Stephen II in his letters to Pipin and to Astulf first writes as if these cities and territories were to be restored to the Empire; then we find that they are to be restored to Rome,' or the 'Roman Republic'; a little later the phrase has become 'restoration to St. Peter'; and finally we slide into the full acknowledgment that the whole of the Exarchate and Pentapolis and all these other territories and cities are claimed with sovran rights by 'Holy Church' and by her supreme pontiff and his successors to all eternity.

NOTE ON THE BYZANTINE EMPERORS

800–1453

SINCE through the usurpation of the diadem by Irene and the coronation of Charles by the Pope Rome has once more become in Italy the generally acknowledged capital of the Empire, there will be less reason than ever to divert our attention from Italy in order to follow closely the fortunes of the so-called Byzantine Emperors. But there will still be occasions when we shall need to cast a glance in this direction, so that a few words on the subject of the later Eastern (Byzantine) Empire may prove useful.

Six hundred and fifty-three years elapsed between the revival of the Roman Empire in 800 and the capture of Constantinople by the Turks. During this interval some fifty-five so-called Emperors of various dynasties reigned at Constantinople. For about four centuries after the days of Irene the obscure annals of this Byzantine Empire offer little of interest (though more than Gibbon thought), and nothing of much importance for the student of Italian history except that the influences of the Byzantine school on the art of Southern Italy is a subject that opens up some alluring vistas.

In 1202–4 Constantinople was taken by the combined forces of the Western Crusaders and the Venetians, and after the city had been barbarously sacked the Count of Flanders, Baldwin, was set on the throne of the Eastern Emperors. Five other 'Latin' Emperors [1] succeeded him. Meanwhile three little offshoots of the Byzantine Empire had struck root. There was an 'Emperor' at Thessalonica, another at Nicaea, in Asia Minor, and a third at Trapezus (Trebizond), on the distant eastern shores of the Euxine. One of the Nicaean

COIN OF MICHAEL PALAEOLOGUS
See p. xxvii

'Emperors,' Vatatzes by name, conquered the 'Empire' of Thessalonica and possessed himself of Macedonia and Thrace, and in 1260–1 one of his successors, Michael Palaeologus, captured Constantinople and expelled Baldwin II, the 'Latin' Emperor, and founded a dynasty which survived till the coming of the Turks, when the last Byzantine Emperor, Constantine Palaeologus, was slain. The accounts, as retold by Gibbon and others, of these 'Roman Empires' of Nicaea and Trebizond in the far East are exceedingly picturesque. At Trebizond an Emperor Alexius handed down to his successors the great imperial name of the Comneni. The court of Trebizond was famous for its wealth and semi-Oriental luxury, and for the beauty of the imperial princesses. From time to time this Trebizond Empire was subject to the Sultan of Rûm (Iconium), and to the Seljuks and Mongols and Turcomans, and finally

[1] Several of these so-called Latin Emperors of Constantinople were Courtenays, about whose English descendants Gibbon gives a long 'Digression' (ch. lxi). Peter Courtenay was the only Eastern Emperor crowned by a Pope at Rome.

it was vanquished by a general of Mohammed II, the conqueror of Constantinople.

The state of things at Constantinople itself—how after its devastation by the Latin Crusaders it again became the richest and most civilized city in Europe and the home of art and learning—is vividly described by Gibbon in some of the later chapters of his *Decline and Fall.*

PART IV

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

800–1190

THE political history of Italy during the four centuries on which we are now entering divides itself into three periods. First we have (800–962) the Carolingian Emperors and the so-called Italian kings, some of whom were crowned as 'Emperors'; then we have, in 962, what we may regard as a new construction—that of the so-called Holy Roman Empire—reared on the foundations of the ancient Empire by Saxon and Franconian monarchs; then (1125–90) a period that covers the reigns of the two Hohenstaufen Fredericks and ends with the rise of the Italian republics and the fusion of the Norman and German monarchies. The first of these periods is, after the death of Charles the Great in 814, a dreary tract. The chronicles of these pious, gross, or imbecile Carolingian Emperors and the scarcely less uninteresting or contemptible 'Italian' rulers present a most perplexing and wearisome maze of political and dynastic complications, of fightings of son against father, of brother against brother, of miserable wars and tumults and bloodshed and malice and superstition and treachery and vice. Doubtless, if we knew more about the real history of Italy during this period —the history of the real Italian people, their thoughts and feelings and ways of life, their language, their literature, and their art; if we could trace more clearly the early growth of the Italian republics, their trade and their passionate love of liberty and municipal independence; if we could observe more closely the gradual self-assertion, in the face of arrogant military and ecclesiastical castes, of the nobility of work and

of manhood, by which feudalism was finally driven out of its strongholds; if we could learn more of the great and good men and women whose individuality is buried under the mouldy chronicles of Popes and Emperors, those of us who are not merely antiquarians or political historians would find the period interesting enough. But its chroniclers give us little except a record of all that is vilest and most despicable in human nature, as exemplified in the persons of foreign over-lords and of rival claimants of kingly and imperial titles, or as exhibited at the courts of crafty, dissolute, and ambitious pontiffs of the Roman Church.

Across this desolate and malarious expanse I shall hasten and shall give only a kind of rough chart of the astounding labyrinth of events that compose its political and ecclesiastical history; but I shall indulge in somewhat fuller detail when we reach the days of the Normans and the momentous epochs of Otto the Great and Frederick Barbarossa. The lists of Emperors, Kings, and Popes, and the genealogical tables, will supply a clue for the disentanglement of dynastic relationships and other such complications, so that it will be possible to take much for granted when treating, in later chapters, such subjects as the rise of the Communes and the development of Romanesque architecture.

(1) The Carolingians (800–888)

The narrative of historical events given in Part III left off with the coronation of Charles at Rome on Christmas Day of the year 800. As Emperor he reigned for thirteen years and one month, dying on January 28, 814. Some of his characteristics have been already mentioned; in a later chapter more will be said about his personality, his influence, and his methods of government; the following facts will therefore suffice for our present purpose.

The vast extent of the new Empire and the great diversity of the many nations that were included within it, held together without cohesion by external pressure, foredoomed it to speedy dissolution. Charles was a great leader and a great soldier,

but not a great Empire-builder—*un grandissimo condottiero*, as Villari says, *senza un vero genio organizzatore*. Moreover, the German hereditary system, under which the monarch was regarded as the personal owner of the realm and generally divided his dominions among several heirs—a system which had proved so fatal to the older Frank kingdom—was adopted by Charles, fondly hoping by this means to prevent his sons from quarrelling. His children, legitimate and illegitimate, had been no less than fifteen in number, but he regarded the three sons of his wife Hildegard, namely Charles, Pipin (formerly Carlmann), and Louis, as his heirs, and by a formal testament drawn up in 806 he had apportioned France (*i.e.* Austrasia and Neustria), Italy, and Aquitaine to these three respectively. But Pipin, as we have seen, died at Milan [1] after his unsuccessful siege of Venice in 810, and his brother Charles died in the following year. Thus the contemplated division of the Empire, after all, did not take place, and the weak and superstitious Louis, named 'the Pious,' or 'the Good-tempered' (*le Débonnaire*), was formally crowned as co-Emperor by his father at Aachen [2] and in the following year succeeded as sole heir to the imperial throne.

Louis the Pious soon showed his character by entreating the new Pope, Stephen IV, to come all the way to Reims to re-crown him. Now this Pope, like several other Popes, had not troubled himself about obtaining for his own consecration the imperial sanction on which Charles the Great had so strongly insisted; but in spite of this the new Emperor not only regarded himself as still uncrowned without the papal unction, but prostrated himself thrice before the Pontiff on his arrival at Reims—a fact well worth remembering in view of the

[1] His epitaph is to be seen in S. Ambrogio.

[2] This was done solely with consent of the nobles of the realm and without any reference to Pope Leo III, whose shameless insistence on Constantine's Donation and whose extravagant interpretation of that of Pipin had evidently annoyed Charles. The Emperor himself set the crown on his son's head, or he perhaps bade him take it from the altar and set it on his own head—'a significant hint,' says Gregorovius, 'for all his successors.'

future strife on the subject of Investiture. Moreover, when on Stephen's death Pope Paschal was hurriedly consecrated before the imperial sanction had time to arrive, Louis not only once more ignored the affront, but graciously granted a Donation similar to that granted by Pipin, confirming (if the document be genuine) all former territorial gifts and conferring on the Church sovran authority over vast territories as well as entire freedom from imperial interference in regard to papal elections. Somewhat curiously, these pious concessions were ere long followed by what seems an act of impiety towards the Supreme Father in God, for Louis, imitating his father according to the flesh, with his own hands placed the imperial crown on his son Lothair's head in the cathedral at Aachen, and assigned to his two younger sons, Pipin and Louis (the German), Aquitaine and Bavaria—apparently without troubling himself in the least about the question of papal unction.

Although Lothair was thus co-Emperor with his father, he had as Emperor (so empty [1] had the title become) nothing to do as yet with Rome or Italy. His youthful cousin, the illegitimate son of Pipin, Bernard by name, had been made King of Italy, for which title he was obliged to do homage. But, resenting such vassalage, the young prince rebelled. Hereupon he was speedily overmastered, and so cruelly blinded by his pious uncle Louis that he died.

Lothair was then made King of Italy in his stead, and accepted the invitation of Pope Paschal that he should have his imperial title confirmed at Rome by the imposition of the papal hands. But how little he was inclined to allow the papal claims to sovranty, or even to judiciary power in Rome itself, is proved by the fact that he set up there his imperial tribunal and as supreme judge decided a case against Pope Paschal. This determined step, to which Lothair was guided rather by

[1] The title used by Carolingian and Saxon Emperors was *Imp. Aug.* with the addition *Rex Francorum et Longobardorum* (the latter after coronation with the Iron Crown of Lombardy). Later it was, before coronation with the golden tiara at Rome, *Romanorum Rex semper Aug.*, and afterwards *Romanorum Imp. semper Aug.*

the example of his grandfather than by the influence of his weak and bigoted father, was undoubtedly in the right direction, and had it been followed up vigorously by himself and his successors might have prevented the miseries that for centuries were caused by the lust of the Papacy for temporal power.[1] As it happened, the co-Emperor was not strong enough to beard the Pope in his own den. As soon as he (Lothair) left Rome some of Paschal's adversaries were arrested and put to death, probably by papal orders—and when envoys arrived from the indignant Emperor to inquire into the matter the crafty pontiff foiled them by a well-known ruse and solemnly asserted before a public assembly in the Lateran his entire innocence, at the same time stating boldly that his enemies had perished as traitors (*velut majestatis reos*).

Thus Lothair's well-meant attempt merely resulted in permanently dividing the Roman people into the two factions whose hostility was later marshalled under the names of Guelf and Ghibelline. So bitter already was this hostility that when Pope Paschal died it proved impossible to bury him in St. Peter's, and the tumults at the election of his successor were so furious that once more Lothair was sent by his father to restore peace. On this occasion (824) he published a *Constitutio* which ordered the residence in Rome of an imperial envoy (*missus*) and made the imperial sanction necessary before the consecration of a Pope.

Ermengard, the wife of Louis the Pious, had died in 818, and Louis had been with difficulty dissuaded from retiring to a monastery; but ere long he married again and soon stood helpless under the fascinations of his second wife, the Bavarian princess Judith; and when in course of time her young son, afterwards Charles the Bald, seemed likely to outrival in princely prospects his elder brothers and to contest

[1] That there were among the Popes some vigorous and wise rulers, and a few really good men, will become evident as we proceed; but no words can state too forcibly that the ideals of the Roman pontiffs were not those of the Founder of Christianity. History has to regard the medieval Papacy, not as a Christian influence, but as a purely temporal power, and one that possessed unfair advantages by its hold on the superstitions of humanity.

their birthrights, a disastrous family feud was the result. The three elder sons, Lothair, Pipin, and Louis the German, combined and succeeded in putting their stepmother into prison; they also nearly forced their father into a monastery. But the people interfered; the queen was liberated, and the weak old king was reinstated. He died however shortly afterwards (840) and straightway the three brothers (for Pipin was dead) turned their weapons against each other, until at Verdun they made an agreement by which Charles the Bald retained France, Louis Germany, and Lothair Italy together with a belt of country dividing France from Germany and extending from the mouth of the Rhine to that of the Rhone. This curious strip of dominion, with its two capitals of Aachen and Arles, he named Lotharingia, and a part of it still retains the name (Lothringen, Lorraine).

Let us now leave the dynastic squabbles of these Carolingians and turn our attention more closely to what was going on in Italy itself during Lothair's reign. In the north of the peninsula, although various cities, of which Venice was the most conspicuous, had gained a large measure of independence, the Frank monarch who called himself 'King of Italy' was a real ruler. In Rome, too, as we have seen, he succeeded to some extent in upholding against the Papacy his imperial rights. But in the south and centre this same self-styled 'Rex Longobardorum' had only a shadow of authority over the Lombard duchy of Spoleto and not even this over the duchy of Benevento.[1]

[1] A few years later (871) the 'Emperor' Louis II, after capturing Bari from the Saracens, was himself captured, together with his queen and retinue, by the Duke of Benevento, who held him a prisoner for a month and made him swear never again to enter the duchy. This 'unheard-of profanation' of the sanctity of the imperial dignity, as Gregorovius from his Teutonic standpoint regards it, seems to have excited much ridicule and not a little malicious jubilation among the many Italian enemies of the Frankish-Roman Empire. For a popular ballad composed on this occasion see Part V, ch. iv. It is worthy of remark that just before this 'profanation' took place Louis had answered a sneering letter from the Eastern 'Emperor' (who refused to acknowledge his titles) by a slashing attack on the claims of the Byzantine 'Roman Emperors' and a vehement assertion of his own rights. 'Know thou,' he writes, 'that if We were not Imperator Romanorum We could not be Imperator Francorum; for from the Romans We received this name and this dignity.'

Besides, there were not a few of the southern cities, such as Salerno and Capua, which not only refused to recognize the Frankish supremacy, but were asserting their independence against their Lombard over-lords, or which, like Naples and Amalfi, were shaking off Byzantine domination and acquiring autonomy.

As had been the case with the Lombards, the incompleteness of the Frank conquest precluded all possibility of the unification of Italy. Her disunion, though immeasurably less of a misfortune than would have been her absorption in the Germanic race, had the disadvantage of exposing her to foreign invaders, as it has ever exposed her until our own days; and no small part in the present act of our drama is played once more by invaders—invaders very different from the Arian Goths and Vandals, or the Catholic Franks, or even the heathen Huns. The Mohammedans or 'Saracens' of Arabia and North Africa, of whom we have already heard, had spread their conquests with consternating rapidity over the whole of the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean, had mastered most of Spain, and would have mastered all Western Europe but for the crushing defeat inflicted on them at Tours by Charles Martel in 732. During the next century they constantly infested the coasts of Sicily, Sardinia, and South Italy, committing the most audacious acts of piracy and devastation, sometimes in alliance with Christian cities that called on them for aid against their Christian adversaries. In 827 a Byzantine general, Euphemius by name, having incited an unsuccessful insurrection in Sicily, fled to Africa and there persuaded the Saracens to send across a fleet of 100 vessels with some 10,000 fighters to occupy Sicily. Ill-fortune attended them at first; defeats and pestilence decimated them; but large reinforcements were sent, and after a long and terrible investment they captured Palermo—whose population, it is said, was reduced in course of the siege from 70,000 to 3000. From Sicily the Saracens then began to make bold descents on the coastlands of Southern Italy, and their audacity was encouraged by the treasonable collusion of various Italian cities, amongst which

Naples seems to have won special infamy by actually helping the Moslems to capture Messina.

To protect Rome itself against these Moslems Pope Gregory IV (in the reign of Lothair) thought it necessary to build a new town [1] at Ostia and to fortify it very strongly, placing powerful *ballistae* on the ramparts. But the Saracens nevertheless forced their way up the Tiber (846) and sacked the country up to the walls of the city, plundering and desecrating the two great extra-mural basilicas of St. Paul and St. Peter. The Anglo-Saxons, Franks, and other strangers who had their 'colonies' in the Borgo, were overcome, and a desperate fight took place on the Vatican bridge; but finally the infidels were repulsed by the Romans with the help of Lombard troops from Spoleto. The alarm caused by this audacious exploit determined Lothair and the Pope, the energetic and martial Leo IV, to enclose the Borgo [2] with walls, and this quarter was henceforth known as the Leonine City (*Città Leonina*).

While these new walls were rising (that is to say in 849) there took place a very important naval battle off Ostia—a battle as momentous perhaps as that of Salamis or Châlons or Tours. The Neapolitans, who had found reason to repent of their alliance with the Moslems, wiped off their disgrace by boldly attacking a powerful Saracen fleet that was threatening Ostia, and aided by a storm, which wrecked many of the enemy's vessels, they took an immense number of captives, many of whom were forced to work at building the walls of the Leonine City. A splendidly conceived but rather

[1] *Portus*, on the north outlet of the Tiber, had for centuries outrivalled the old *Ostia* on the south arm, but its access to the sea had got choked and Ostia was again used. Gregory's New Ostia lies behind the ruins of the ancient town. The Portus arm was reopened in 1612 and Ostia was again deserted; but Porto is now a mile and a half from the seashore, where there is the fashionable bathing-place Fiumicino.

[2] A year or so after this Saracen scare the general consternation was increased by an earthquake and then by the great *Incendio del Borgo*, which annihilated the wooden dwellings of the Saxons and Lombards and destroyed the portico of St. Peter's. It was stayed by Leo—whom in Raffael's fresco one sees making the sign of the Cross. By the way, Ethelwulf and his little son Alfred (later King Alfred) spent a year in Rome about 853–54, and contributed liberally to the rebuilding of the Saxon quarters.

blood-curdling fresco designed by Raffael and executed by Giov. da Udine represents Leo IV (or rather Leo X !) at Ostia, blessing with uplifted hand the massacre of Saracen captives. We must, however, try to remember that the scene is not historically correct, for Leo is said to have held a supplicatory service in S. Aurea, the Ostian basilica, the day *before* the battle and to have returned at once to Rome.

[Before leaving the subject of the Saracens it may be well to glance forward and note that for many years they continued to hold Sicily and to harry Southern Italy. They made Bari their chief stronghold and devastated the whole of Apulia, Calabria, and even Campania right up to the gates of Salerno. In 888 they destroyed the great Benedictine abbey of Monte Cassino, as has been related in a former chapter. From time to time they were severely punished. Louis II actually captured Bari and made prisoner the Saracen 'Sultan.' The so-called Emperor Guido (*c.* 890) cut them to pieces and razed a strong military camp that they had built on the Garigliano (Liris), and when this camp was rebuilt it was again utterly destroyed by the allied states of South Italy in the reign of Berengar (915). But they did not cease to be a constant source of danger and humiliation and caused even the Saxon Emperors much trouble. Indeed Otto III was badly beaten by them and very nearly perished in the battle. The Saracens of Spain, moreover, for many years harried the northern coasts. They mastered Provence and Sardinia and devastated the *marina* of Liguria, Tuscany, and Latium, on one occasion burning to the ground a part of the city of Pisa. Finally, these Spanish Saracens were vanquished by the Pisan fleets, and those of Sicily and South Italy were conquered and assimilated by the Normans, as we shall hear later.]

In 855 both Lothair and Pope Leo died—the former in a monastery, to which he had withdrawn, leaving his throne to his son Louis II, who had some five years before been crowned as co-Emperor. Leo was succeeded by Benedict III, who was the candidate of the papal party and was chosen against the votes of the official envoys and the express wish

of the new Emperor—a very plain proof of the state of things at Rome.

Although doubtless much of great importance for the future of Italy was going on unobserved by chroniclers, the annals of the twenty years during which Louis II reigned (855–75) offer us scarcely anything of interest except the Emperor's campaigns against the Saracens, which we have already noted, and certain facts connected with the vigorous conduct of Pope Nicholas I, of which the following are worth recounting. Nicholas had been elected by imperial influence, but it was not long before he was in vehement strife with Louis, and the total disregard of all ordinary rules of honesty which seems to have been almost always combined in the papal conscience with other, not seldom admirably courageous, qualities, induced him to use as a weapon of offence the notorious 'Isidore Decretals,' a collection (compiled in France) of forged decrees of fictitious Councils, by which the Roman pontiff was given supremacy over all other bishops, and the ecclesiastical authority (as in the famous Donations of Constantine and Pipin) was made entirely independent of the civil power. After this passage of arms with the Emperor Pope Nicholas turned fiercely against the Archbishop of Ravenna, who, like many of his predecessors, had assumed a somewhat defiant attitude against Rome, and after a brief duel completely vanquished him. Then he attacked the Patriarch of Constantinople and widened the breach which finally ended in the rupture between the West and the East on the fiercely disputed *Filioque* question—the question whether the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father. Then he showed his courage on a point of a less abstruse nature. The brother of Louis II, Lothair, king of Lotharingia, had become deeply enamoured of a lady called Waldrada, who exercised a daemonic fascination over him, and whom he had actually caused to be crowned in the place of his queen, Luitberga. It was a case not unlike that of Anne Bullen, and in both cases the Pope was doubtless on the right side. A Church Council at Metz had sanctioned the divorce and blessed the new marriage,

and the Archbishops of Trier and of Cöln came to Rome to urge their views; but Pope Nicholas for three weeks refused them audience and then deposed and excommunicated both of them.

Thereupon Emperor Louis, who was at Benevento on a campaign against the Saracens, in great indignation marched upon Rome and occupied the Civitas Leonina. Pope Nicholas adopted a policy of passive resistance. He entered St. Peter's basilica and for two whole days knelt fasting before the high altar; and in the end he triumphed, for Louis fell ill of Roman fever and returned to the north without having effected anything; and Lothair died a few years later, after making vain and humiliating efforts to procure from the successor of Pope Nicholas the recognition of Waldrada as queen.

When Louis II died at Brescia in 875 his two uncles, Louis the German king and Charles the Bald of France, who had already seized on Lothair's dominions, were rival claimants for the kingship of Italy and the imperial title, and it is interesting to note that on this occasion, instead of a self-crowned Emperor, we have the matter decided by the Pope—the energetic and ambitious John VIII—and by the Italian magnates. Certain it is that Charles was invited—almost summoned—to Rome by John in order to receive papal coronation as Emperor, and that he obeyed and immediately afterwards proceeded to Pavia, where in the presence of a great council of Italian nobles and prelates he was crowned by the Archbishop of Milan with the Lombard Iron Crown as King of Italy. The two years of the reign of Charles the Bald are marked by nothing but his perpetual fightings against his nephews, the sons of Louis the German (one of whom, Charles the Fat, succeeded him) and by renewed troubles with the Saracens, who, although defeated off the Circeian Cape by an Italian fleet commanded by Pope John in person, ravaged the Roman territory and, aided once more by the treacherous Neapolitans, threatened Rome itself.[1]

[1] Pope John VIII tried to rival Leo IV by building walls to include S. Paolo fuori le mura and by calling the new quarter Johannipolis—but walls and name soon disappeared.

On the death of Charles the Bald in 877 there followed a dismal period of four years of petty wars, during which there was no Emperor. The claimants were the son of Charles, Louis the Stammerer (*le Bègue*), and his three cousins, the sons of Louis the German. One of these, Carlmann, was made King of Italy, and on his death in 879 his brother Charles the Fat succeeded him and was finally crowned Emperor in 881. As all his rivals [1] had died, Charles the Fat not much later became also king of Germany and of France (that is, of the East and the West Frank kingdoms) and was thus monarch of almost the whole of the former Empire of Charles the Great. But his stupid incompetence proved no less remarkable than his bodily grossness, and an assembly of nobles held at Tribur, near Mainz, deposed him in 887, and in the next year he died. Thus after eighty-eight years the hereditary dynasty of Carolingian princes who called themselves Kings of Italy and Emperors of the Romans came practically to an end, although, as we shall see, some of the kings and so-called Emperors of the following obscure and tempestuous period were illegitimately (as Arnulf) or through the female line (as Berengar and Louis) connected with the stock of Charles the Great.

(2) So-called Italian Kings and Emperors (888–962)

The degradation of the imperial and kingly dignity was due to numerous causes. One was the degeneracy of the Carolingian princes; another the fatal family feuds that multiplied like hydra-heads; another the usurpation of civil authority by the Pope and the bishops; another the exhausting and often vain struggles against external foes, such as the Saracens, to whom were soon to be added the Hungarians and the Normans; and, lastly, a very important cause was the rapidly growing independence not only of various city communes, such

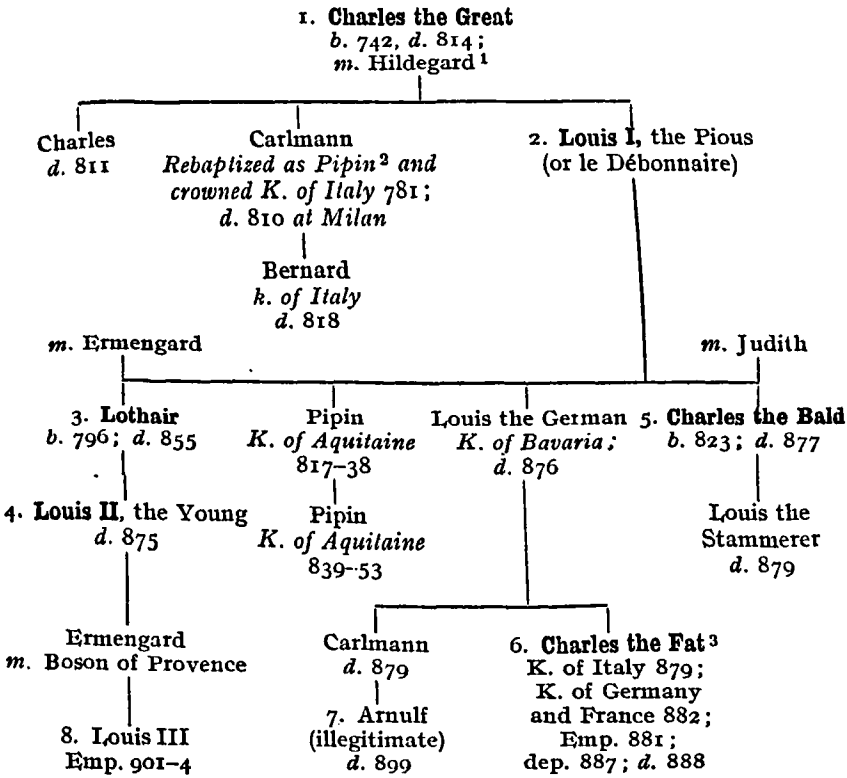
[1] A rival still existed in the person of Boson, Duke of Vienne, who, favoured by Pope John VIII, had founded a new kingship in Provence and South Burgundy, with the city of Arles as capital. He married a granddaughter of Lothair I, and his son, Louis III, afterwards became 'Emperor' for a brief space.

LINEAGE OF THE CAROLINGIANS

(AS FAR AS ITALY IS CONCERNED)

N.B. For the ancestors of Charles see p. 250.

The Emperors are numbered.



[1] Charles *m.* later Fastrada. He had altogether about fifteen children.

[2] A hunchback half-brother, also called Pipin, rebelled and was put into a monastery (p. 242).

[3] Legitimate Carolingians in Italy become extinct with the death of Charles the Fat. In Germany the dynasty ends with the son of Arnulf, Louis the Child, *d.* 911; in France with Louis V, le Fainéant, poisoned in 987.

as Venice and Naples (to say nothing of Rome), but also of the powerful feudatories of the crown, who in many cases had founded hereditary duchies or marquisates and were naturally inclined to aim still higher and to fight among themselves for the crown of Italy, or even to grasp at the elusive phantom of the imperial diadem.

The break-up of the Carolingian Empire was followed by the gradual rise of two great and distinct nations, the French and the German; and for a time it seemed as if also Italy might at length coalesce into a nation under native kings. For this reason Italian writers are apt to linger somewhat fondly over these so-called 'Italian' dukes and marquesses, and over what they call the *regno d'Italia indipendente*, whereas by the German historian this period, during which Italy was to a great extent free from Germanic domination, is often regarded as almost too trivial or too degraded to deserve description.[1]

As I am making some observations in a later chapter on the state of learning, religion, and art in Italy during the ninth and tenth centuries, and as the fightings of rival claimants to the crown of Italy are intrinsically of minimal importance, I shall give a very brief account of what is generally called the history of this period.

In the case of Charles the Fat we noted that the election to the imperial dignity seems to have become, for the time at least, dependent on the Pope, and that the magnates, lay and ecclesiastical, of Northern Italy had assumed the right to choose or sanction their own king; for they caused Charles to be crowned at Pavia with the Lombard crown by the Archbishop of Milan. On his deposition it was therefore but natural that these magnates should again choose their own king. Ignoring the fact that Arnulf of Carinthia, a bastard Carolingian, had

[1] Müller, for instance, says not a word about this period except to mention with praise the Germanic Arnulf and then to state the incidents that led to the interference of Otto the Saxon. He labels the whole period of seventy-three years as a *Parteikampf zwischen grossen Familien, die zum Teil ihre Verwandtschaft auf die Karolinger zuriickführten.* Gregorovius gives many details about Rome at this epoch, but little else.

been elected in the place of Charles as German king and regarded himself also as *ipso facto* King of Italy, they chose Berengar, the Marquess of Friuli,[1] son of Gisela, a daughter of Louis the Pious.

During the next thirty-seven years (888–925) Berengar, recognized by a certain number of Italians as their king, had to contend successively against five rival claimants, four of whom succeeded in obtaining papal coronation as 'Emperors' before he himself attained that dignity in 915. The first of these rivals was the Duke of Spoleto. How audaciously independent these Lombard dukes of Southern Italy had become we have already seen. While Louis II was still Emperor and Hadrian II was Pope (in 867) the Spoletan duke, Lambert, had suddenly invaded and plundered Rome. This feat he repeated in 878, when he kept Pope John VIII a prisoner for a month, endeavouring vainly to force him to bestow the imperial title on Carlmann and using such threats that the Pontiff, whom we have already admired for his martial courage and his brilliant defeat of the Saracens, fled away on a ship, betaking himself to Count (afterwards King) Boson of Provence.

Now this Duke Lambert of Spoleto had a son Guido, whom Charles the Fat deposed on a charge of treason, giving his dukedom to Berengar of Friuli. But Guido had reinstated himself by help of the Saracens,[2] and after defeating Berengar on the river Trebia, near Pavia, had the Iron Crown set on his own head as King of Italy, and two years later (891) was crowned with the imperial diadem at St. Peter's in Rome, although the Pope, Stephen V, was in secret collusion with a third competitor, namely Arnulf of Carinthia, who, as the successor of Charles the Fat north of the Alps, had all this time

[1] Friuli (*i.e.* Forum Julii), in the north-east corner of Italy, was made by Alboin into a Lombard duchy with Cividale as its capital. It was made into a mark (marquisate) by Charles the Great, and extended to the Adige. What claims Berengar had to be regarded as 'Italian' it is difficult to say. According to Villari (but not Gregorovius and others), Berengar was not elected king till Arnulf's death in 899.

[2] It was an ill return that he made by annihilating their camp on the Garigliano a few years later (see p. 319).

been asserting his claims to the kingship of Italy and also to the title of Emperor.[1]

Guido was not content with possessing the imperial title. He wished to found an imperial dynasty by making also his son, Lambert, an Emperor, and the notorious Formosus, who had succeeded to the papal throne, at first showed favour to these ambitious projects and crowned Lambert at Ravenna as co-Emperor, but when after Guido's death Arnulf descended (896) with a strong army into Italy and entered Rome the weak-minded or crafty pontiff transferred his support from the Spoletan to the German claimant, and, although he had already set the imperial crown on Lambert's head, he now repeated the ceremony in favour of his rival.

Arnulf, however, did not gain much from having attained the object of his ambition, for while preparing to attack Lambert at Spoleto he was suddenly struck down by paralysis, and though he lingered on for three years his political influence in Italy was at an end. The revulsion of feeling at Rome against the coronation of this 'barbarian' and against the Pope who had perpetrated this execrable *unctio barbarica* was so strong that the corpse of Formosus was actually disinterred in order to be arraigned before a Synod—a scene that will be described in a later chapter. Lambert, on the contrary, strongly supported by his ambitious mother Agiltrud (the daughter of that Beneventan duke who took Emperor Louis prisoner), rose greatly in popular favour, and would probably have succeeded in outvying Berengar, his one remaining rival, but in 898 he was killed by a fall from his horse while hunting—or was, if another account is the true one, assassinated. Thus Berengar was left without competitors.

But his peaceful enjoyment of the title of King of Italy was short-lived. A new and terrible enemy, the Magyars, as they called themselves, or the Hun-ugri, as the Slavs called them, of the same Oriental stock as the Huns and not unlike

[1] It is noticeable that at first Berengar himself did homage to Arnulf for the Italian crown.

them in their savagery and pitiless inhumanity, had advanced in vast numbers from the Ural regions and now, finding but little resistance in the Slav peoples, had already under their chieftain Arpad seized on the country which from them still bears the name of Hungary; and they soon penetrated into Germany, France, and Italy, making themselves for half a century the terror of Europe, until in 955 they were totally routed by the Emperor Otto I at the great battle of Lechfeld.[1]

It was in 899 that these Magyars came streaming down into Italy. They inflicted such a defeat on Berengar near the river Brenta that once more his adversaries took courage, and, following the policy that brought such woes unnumber'd on Italy, encouraged as claimant of the imperial crown an alien prince, Louis, the son of 'King' Boson of Provence and of Ermengard, the daughter of the Carolingian Louis II. The young pretender, now King of Provence, responded to the invitation; he came to Rome and was actually crowned Emperor by Pope John IX; but Berengar boldly assailed him and made him promise to go home and never again to come to Italy. This promise, however, Louis broke, and in 904 he was captured by Berengar, who blinded him and sent him back to Provence.

Once more Berengar had a period of uncontested kingship, and in 915, having succeeded, together with Pope John X, in forming a league of the Lombard duchies with Naples and other cities for the object of annihilating the Saracen camp on the Garigliano—an object that was attained—he was acclaimed and crowned Emperor at Rome. Things now began again to look as if Italy might ultimately attain peace and unity under her own rulers; but these native-born Kings and Emperors were little to the mind of the Popes, who found themselves confronted with ever-present control, and the ambitious and unprincipled John X, shortly after he had set the imperial diadem on the head of Berengar, began, like many

[1] For these Magyars or Hungarians see Index. The modern Hungarians are descended from them and not, as some assert, from the Huns.

of his predecessors and successors, to 'play the harlot,' as Dante calls it, with foreign princes. He invited Rudolf, king of trans-Juran Burgundy, to assume the kingship of Italy, and actually set the Iron Crown on his head at Pavia in 922. Thereupon Berengar, reduced to great straits, had recourse to the still less praiseworthy expedient of inviting his old enemies, the Magyars, to re-invade Italy. This they did—but, instead of helping Berengar, they betook themselves to plundering the country. They set fire to Pavia, and then in large marauding bands they spread southwards as far as Rome. Meanwhile Berengar had succeeded without their aid in beating Rudolf and driving him back to Burgundy; but shortly afterwards (924) he was murdered at Verona, it is said by an intimate friend, Flambert, who had already conspired against him and had been pardoned.[1]

During the next thirty-seven years there was no Emperor. That which had once signified world-wide Empire had become an empty title affected by Byzantine rulers, or conferred by Popes on Germanic monarchs, or Provençal princes, or Lombard dukes. The non-existence of an *Imperator Romanorum* in Italy for more than the third of a century was a matter of small moment, for it is the reality behind such names that lends them their only importance, and whatever importance attaches itself to the later 'Holy Roman Empire' is due not to unbroken succession, but entirely to the political and personal importance of the Germanic monarchs who, more or less with the sanction of the Roman people, assumed the imperial title. The original *Imperium Romanum* had come to an end before the sixth century, and the only right that medieval and modern *Imperatores Romanorum* had to their title was the right of might, or the right possessed by the Romans (and in some cases perhaps by the Popes as representatives of the Roman people) to revive and confer that title as they liked. But while it

[1] He had risen early to attend Mass at a church near to his palace—doubtless the little church of SS. Siro e Libera, still existing near the remains of Theoderic's palace.

must be allowed that the imperial dignity as revived in the person of Otto was still more of a fiction than the title which with their *piissimus Augustus, a Deo coronatus, magnus Imperator* the Romans conferred on Charles the Great, or even more of a fiction than the honour conferred by the *unctio barbarica* of papal hands on Arnulf of Carinthia, it should not be forgotten that any such thing as imperial succession has sometimes what one may call a subjective reality; for, however fictitious may be the uninterrupted transmission of some mystic prerogative, the emotions excited in minds that accept such pretensions often prove a real and potent force in historical evolution, and they cannot be ignored.[1]

Never-ending feuds and civic discords, the entire submergence of all patriotism in the meanest personal ambitions, the most shameful collusion with alien princes and barbarian foes—such are the main traits of this so-called *regno d'Italia indipendente*, during which the Italians of that age proved themselves utterly unworthy of independence.

A bare statement of the political events of these thirty-seven years, from the murder of Berengar in 924 to the assumption of the imperial title by the Saxon Otto in 962, is given in the List of Emperors and Kings (pp. 378–79) and will serve as a clue while we explore a little further in order to discover some of the forces that were at work behind the scenes of this perplexingly crowded puppet-show. The chief of these influences were exercised by women, and more than one of these women attained for a time a political power comparable with that of Placidia or Pulcheria; but they gained and retained that power by the exercise of a daemonic, or perhaps we may call it a diabolic, fascination that recalls the younger Agrippina

[1] The Papacy, regarded as a temporal power possessing often an enormous advantage in the recognition of its spiritual pretensions, cannot, of course, be ignored even by those who find it impossible to accept transmission of spiritual prerogatives in the face of such facts as the most atrocious crimes and the most shameful vice—the throne of Christ's vicar seized on by murderers—the *pazza bestialità* (as Villari calls it) of many of the Popes, who made the Lateran a den of assassins and fornicators—a state of things that lasted intermittently for centuries and was such that no wonder all heaven blushed fiery red at St. Peter's passionate invective, reported by Dante.

or Lucrezia Borgia rather than the daughter or the granddaughter of the great Theodosius.

One of these women was Bertha, daughter of that Waldrada whose fascinations had caused such trouble in the case of Lothair (p. 320). Bertha had first married Count Theobald of Provence, by whom she had a son, Hugo. She then married Adalbert, Marquess of Tuscany, and had several children, to one of which, Ermengard, she transmitted the fatal dower of fascinating beauty. Bertha and, after her death, Ermengard —now Marchioness of Ivrea—seem to have gained such influence over the Italian nobles that soon after the murder of Berengar these nobles decided to ignore Rudolf of Burgundy (though already crowned by the Pope) and to invite the young Count of Provence to assume the crown of Italy.[1] Hugo landed at Pisa (926) and was crowned at Pavia, Pope John X for the third time giving his unholy unction to a claimant during the life of his rival and thus causing to fester the great open sore of Italy instead of aiding, as Head of the Christian Church, to bind up and heal her wounds.

* * * * *

A Glance backward at Rome from 896 to 926

But it was in Rome that female domination at this epoch had become most notable; and we must retrace our steps to observe how this began. Ever since the days when (896) Pope Formosus had crowned Arnulf as Emperor and when, to avenge this indignity, his corpse had been disinterred and arraigned before a Synod by Pope Stephen VI a most scandalous state of things had prevailed in Rome, where within eight years (896–904) there were no less than ten Popes, most of whom gained or lost their office by criminal intrigue or murder.[2]

[1] Ermengard is said to have fascinated and befooled Rudolf himself, who, according to Gregorovius, was 'transformed into a whining adorer, while the new Circe with a contemptuous laugh took the Lombard crown from his head and gave it over to her stepbrother.'

[2] Stephen VI and John X are known to have been strangled. Leo V and Christopher were deposed and probably murdered. The fates of Anastasius III and Lando were, says Gregorovius, 'probably tragic and terrible';

During this state of things, at a time when all Italy is supposed by some to have been blessed by independence under the rule of her own king Berengar, a formidable despotism had begun to arise in Rome—one before which during half a century both the Papacy and the Kingship of Italy were to succumb. A certain Theophylact, a leader of the lay aristocracy (*judices de militia*), had risen to the rank of *Dux et Magister militum* and had assumed the titles of Senator and Consul, while his wife, who bore the ill-omened name of Theodora,[1] and her two daughters Marozia and Theodora succeeded in attracting by their beauty and dissolute habits a large number of adorers and satellites. In 904 the ambitious Cardinal Sergius, who had for years endeavoured to grasp the papal tiara, and who had at last succeeded in becoming the paramour of Marozia, was made Pope, and henceforth for many years the pontifical office was dependent on these women. For seven years this man, who is described by Baronius and other ecclesiastical writers as a 'monster' and by Gregorovius as a 'terrorizing criminal,' occupied the chair of St. Peter, while his concubine and her Semiramis-like mother held court with a pomp and voluptuousness that recalled the worst days of the ancient Empire.

Sergius III died in 911. Two Popes followed about whom we know next to nothing, but whose election and sudden disappearance were probably due to court intrigues. Then a certain Presbyter John, who had long made love to the no longer youthful Theodora and had been made Archbishop of Ravenna, was by the influence of his paramour transferred to the papal throne (914). This is that lecherous and treacherous Pope John X of whom we have already heard more than

nor can we feel certain that it was not so with Theodorus II, Boniface VI, Benedict IV, Leo VI, Stephen VII, and with the bastard of Pope Sergius and Marozia, John XI, who—a mere youth—reigned only about four years. Of the other half-dozen nonentities who were made Popes by Alberich, certainly Stephen VIII came to a tragic and shameful end, and not much later Alberich's son, Pope John XII, was found under disgraceful circumstances in company with a married woman, and was so cudgelled that he soon after died (p. 338).

[1] Of unknown parentage. Some have believed that, like Ermengard, she was related to the wild strain of Waldrada.

enough. Meantime Marozia, having lost *her* pontifical lover, had married (*c.* 913) a soldier of fortune, a certain Alberich, who after serving in turn under Guido and Berengar had succeeded in making himself Duke of Spoleto.

It was shortly after this that Berengar, favoured by Theophylact and Alberich and their two all-powerful consorts, came to Rome and was crowned Emperor (915) by Pope John X, after having routed the Saracens on the Garigliano, as has been already narrated.

Theophylact, Theodora, and Alberich now suddenly and somewhat mysteriously disappear from the scene, and Marozia, establishing herself in the huge fortress of S. Angelo (the Mole of Hadrian), dominates Rome. Pope John, as we have already seen, abandons the cause of Berengar and invites and crowns Rudolf of Burgundy, and not long afterwards repeats the process with Hugo of Provence. These traitorous intrigues bring Marozia into collision with the former lover of her mother, and finally she succeeds in seizing and imprisoning him in the fortress, and ere long the unhappy pontiff is put to death by her orders—strangled, it is said, or stifled with a pillow.

* * * * *

After the death of her husband, Alberich of Spoleto, Marozia had married Guido of Tuscany, the brother of Ermengard and the stepbrother of Hugo of Provence. Now when Hugo was elected and crowned King of Italy (926) it was natural that Marozia should feel deeply aggrieved, for she had doubtless wedded Guido with the object of making *herself* Queen of Italy. But, as luck would have it, Guido soon died, and Hugo of Provence about the same time lost his wife. The chance was one not to be lost, and ere long the seductive arts of the mistress of Rome were once more crowned with success. Hugo came to Rome (932) and celebrated his marriage with Marozia in the Castle of S. Angelo—the ceremony being performed and the royal pair being blessed by the lately elected Pope John XI, the bastard offspring of the bride by the paramour of her youthful days, Pope Sergius III.

But by her first husband, Alberich of Spoleto, Marozia had a legitimate son, now about eighteen years of age, also named Alberich, who seems to have inherited his father's soldier-like qualities and to have been possessed of a masterful character and a genius for leadership. This youth was profoundly disgusted by his mother's conduct and resented the presence of his new stepfather, in whose retinue he had to serve as page, and when Hugo rewarded his impudence [1] with a box on the ear he rushed forth and with fiery eloquence harangued the assembled multitude, who forthwith made an assault on the castle. Hugo, terrified, was let down by a rope and fled from Rome. Alberich imprisoned his mother,[2] put his base-born half-brother, the young Pope, into strict custody, and assumed the titles of *Princeps* and *Senator*.

Alberich, or Alberico, governed Rome, perhaps with severity, but with evident justice, for twenty-two years (932–54). It is an episode in Italian history full of most interesting possibilities, frustrated, alas, by Alberich's son and successor, who had inherited the character of his grandmother, Marozia. Alberich's military reforms were important. He reconstituted the army in twelve *scholae*, corresponding to the twelve regions of the city, each commanded by a *banderese*, or flag-captain, like the Florentine *Gonfaloniere della compagnia* (not of course the Gonfaloniere of Justice, who was a political magnate). Under his titles of *Princeps* and *Senator* he evidently combined in his own person the chief legislative and executive powers; for the Senate had ceased to exist and the nobles seem to have acted merely as his subordinate officials. As President of the Tribunal,[3] like the Venetian Doges of early days, he held an almost absolute power in his hands, and although on his coins we find his name associated with that of the reigning Pope, it is very evident that none of the seven pontiffs of this period had any political authority. Most of them were doubtless

[1] He purposely spilt a cup of wine, or water, over the king.

[2] We hear no more of her, nor of any demand by Hugo for her release.

[3] The Tribunal often held its sittings in the *Aula ad lupam* in the Lateran, so called from the Capitoline She-wolf, which in this age was preserved there.

selected by Alberich himself, and under his *régime* a Pope was, as he should be, nothing but the Head of the Church, exercising spiritual influence. And it cannot be doubted that Alberich highly appreciated the value of spiritual influence—at least as an accessory of civil power. This is apparent from two facts. Firstly, he encouraged vigorously the reform of monasteries[1] which had been initiated at Cluny, in France, by Friar Berno, and when Berno's disciple, Odo, visited Rome he gave him a palace on the Aventine for the purpose of founding a reformed convent (now S. Maria Aventina and the priory of the Knights of Malta). Secondly, he was so impressed with the necessity of recognizing and using religious influences that he determined to combine in one person the chief civil and the chief ecclesiastical authority—an audacious experiment, which seems to have succeeded in the case of the early Roman Emperors and in that of certain Moslem Caliphs, but which in many cases has proved the source of great trouble. Before his death he assembled the nobles of Rome before the *Confessio* of St. Peter's and made them swear that when the next vacancy occurred they would elect his son and successor, Octavian, to the papal throne. We shall see how this interesting experiment succeeded.

Before Alberich died, in 954, King Hugo had thrice (933, 936, and 941) attacked Rome in order to avenge himself and to expel his rebellious stepson; but Alberich had repulsed him with brilliant success, and in spite of a temporary truce (during which he married Hugo's daughter) he defied all his efforts to enter the city and receive the imperial crown from the hands of the Pope.

About 940 a rival claimant to the crown of Italy had appeared in the person of another Berengar, Marquess of Ivrea (stepson of Ermengard above mentioned). Hugo, it is said,

[1] Most of the Benedictine monasteries had now become 'dens of vice,' and to copy out the old Rule was mere 'waste of paper,' as St. Benedict said to Dante when they met in Paradise. The Cluny reformers did something, but no general reform took place till the founding of the Camaldoli Order of White Benedictines by Romuald about 1010. It was the immense wealth and the territorial authority of these princely abbots that Alberich wished to reform, quite as much as their morals.

pretended to listen in a friendly way to his claims and invited him to his court, intending to kill or blind him. But Hugo's son, Lothair, through friendship or compassion, revealed the design to Berengar, who fled to Germany and in 946, with the help of Otto, the Saxon king, returned and expelled Hugo, who retired to his native realm of Provence and died shortly afterwards at Arles. Berengar was now nominally the regent of the young king Lothair, but it was not long before Lothair died (950)—very probably poisoned by the man whose life he had saved. Now Hugo had wedded a Burgundian dowager and had married her daughter, Adelheid, to his son Lothair. On Lothair's death Berengar tried to force Adelheid to marry his son Adalbert, whom he had nominated as his partner in the Kingship of Italy. Adelheid very naturally declined the honour. She was forthwith imprisoned in a tower on the Lago di Garda; but she escaped and appealed to Otto of Saxony.[1] Impelled by this and by other appeals from the enemies of the tyrannous Berengar, Otto descended with an army—the first German army that had crossed the Alps for half a century—and, having seized Pavia, married the fair Adelheid and had himself crowned King of Italy, though Berengar still held that title. He also sent word to Pope Agapetus that he intended to come to Rome and be crowned as Emperor. This design however he prudently abandoned, for Alberich gave him to understand that without his leave no king should enter Rome, and this leave he refused to give. But after Alberich's death in 954 the state of things at Rome became intolerable. Octavian, his dissolute son, succeeded him as *Princeps* and *Senator*, and, on the decease of Agapetus in 955, was also elected Pope, taking the name John XII.

The accounts given of the *pazza bestialità* of this papal libertine by impartial writers such as Villari and Gregorovius, and even by partial writers such as the Abbé Duchesne (in his splendid edition of the *Liber Pontificalis*), are almost incredible.

[1] A noble named Attus (Azzo) seems to have helped her to escape. He was owner of Canossa Castle, of later fame.

He is said to have kept a large harem of concubines. In company with dissolute boon companions he abandoned himself to every kind of voluptuous excess. He used to drink health to the devil and to invoke the pagan 'demon' gods. We hear of a deacon ordained in a stable, a bishop consecrated at the age of ten, a father confessor blinded and dying of his wounds, a cardinal shamefully mutilated and killed by order of this Vicar of Christ. No honest woman, we are told, dared to set her foot in the Lateran.[1] And things were scarcely better at the court and camp of King Berengar the Second, who had humbly received back from the Saxon king at Augsburg the Lombard crown, promising to wear it as Otto's vassal. His insane excesses and insolent cruelty, combined with the bacchanal orgies of the papal-senatorial court at Rome, forced the Italians to appeal once more to the German monarch, who responded and with a large army crossed the Brenner. Finding no resistance in North Italy—for Berengar's soldiers refused to fight—and receiving an invitation from the young profligate at Rome, who had now determined to play off the German against the Italian King of Italy, Otto entered the city and was crowned Emperor on February 2, 962.

Thus by the grace of heaven transmitted through the blood-stained hands of this young ruffian was instituted what was later known as the Holy Roman Empire. How Pope John could be a medium of such grace is a question for theologians; but how little he represented the will of the Romans may be gathered from what an old chronicler, Thietmar, relates. The nobles, we are told, concealed their feelings in a gloomy silence. On the faces of these Romans, whose liberties and power he was come to destroy, Otto read murderous resentment, and

[1] See especially in Count Balzani's *Cronache italiane* the account given by Liudprand, Bishop of Cremona, who was present and acted as Otto's interpreter at the Council at which Pope John was deposed. Liudprand (*c.* 920–70) is the great authority for this epoch. He wrote a *Historia Ottonis* besides other works on the period 888–962. For the dark and perplexing period of the Carolingians and the 'Italian' monarchs we have very little but the *Liber Pontificalis* and untrustworthy monastic chroniclers.

ere he betook himself to the ceremony of coronation he said to Ansfried of Louvain : '*When I kneel at St. Peter's tomb, do thou hold thy sword continually above my head, for I know that my forefathers oft had experience of the treachery of the Romans.*' It should therefore scarcely surprise us that ere the next two years had passed the new Emperor had deposed the Pope to whose apostolic unction he owed his divine rights and had deprived the Romans of their right to elect their own pontiffs.

(3) The Saxon Emperors (962–1024)

A document called the *Privilegium Ottonis* is still extant which (except for some later additions) seems to have been drawn up between Otto and Pope John XII. It officially sanctions the revival of the Empire and the transmission of the dignity from the Frank to the Saxon monarchs; it also renews all the concessions made by the Donations of Pipin and Charles the Great, giving to the Church even Venice and Istria and Naples and Benevento, and Sicily itself—which was still in the hands of the Saracens!

But whatever we may think of renewed Donations and the rehabilitated Empire, the revival of German domination in Italy was a fact the reality of which was substantiated very soon; for when Pope John, incited by the discontented nobility, began to intrigue with Berengar and received Berengar's son, Adalbert, as his guest at Rome, Otto came sweeping back from North Italy. At his approach the Pope and Adalbert took to flight. Otto entered Rome and, having convoked a Council (known as the Council of November), he formally deposed John and gave the Romans his imperial sanction to elect another pontiff, Pope Leo VIII—a precedent of much importance, seeing that during the next hundred years the Popes were selected by the Emperors or nominated with the sanction of their envoys, and did much to restore the good name of the Papacy. But the deposed and exiled Pope John was not easily suppressed. He incited a tumult at Rome, and an assault made on Otto, in the Vatican, was repelled with difficulty and considerable slaughter. Indeed, there is no

saying how things might have ended, for the Romans were fiercely resentful at Otto's insolent interference with their privileges. But Pope John's hour had sounded: he was caught by an indignant husband and so severely cudgelled that he died. The Romans forthwith elected a Pope, Benedict V, in his stead, ignoring Otto's Pope; but the imperial party finally prevailed and Benedict was deposed.

Meanwhile Otto had captured Berengar in North Italy and had sent him off to Germany, where soon after he died.

In 966, disorders having occurred at Rome, Otto again marched south and suppressed the rebels with great severity. The Prefect of the city, who had resisted the Pope (John XIII, Otto's *protégé*), was hung up by the hair to the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius,[1] then paraded, riding back foremost on a donkey, through the streets, and finally taken off to prison in Germany. After this Otto spent the greater part of his life in Italy—a fact that shows how anxious he was, in spite of his vast northern dominions, to establish his title as hereditary Roman Emperor of the West. This anxiety induced him to have his son, a child of twelve, crowned by the Pope with the imperial diadem—a function that took place in St. Peter's on Christmas Day 967. And, not content with this, he tried to secure recognition as Western Emperor from the Emperor of the East, and requested as a bride for the young Otto a Byzantine princess; but the proposal, which included the conquest of Sicily from the Saracens and the cession of the Byzantine possessions in South Italy as dowry, was scornfully rejected by Nicephorus Phocas, the conqueror of Crete, who regarded himself as the only legitimate Roman Emperor and poured contempt on Otto's pretensions. Moreover, although Otto sent his faithful Liudprand [2] as envoy to Constantinople,

[1] Then near the Lateran, now on the Capitol. Called in the Middle Ages the 'horse of Constantine' (see p. 341).

[2] He remained there 120 days and was very disdainfully treated, if we may believe all that he says in his *Account of the Embassy to Constantinople*. Phocas was especially indignant because the Pope had addressed him as *Imperator Graecorum*.

the Byzantine Emperor gathered a fleet to aid Adalbert, Berengar's son, and to recover, if possible, for the Eastern Empire the cities of Capua, Benevento, Ravenna—and Rome! Thus Otto was forced to fight, and with the co-operation of a powerful Lombard duke, Pandulf Iron-head (*Testa di ferro*), who had combined under his rule the provinces of Spoleto, Benevento, and Capua, he besieged Bari; but Bari had open access to the sea, which was dominated by the Byzantine fleet, and, as ill-luck would have it, Pandulf fell into an ambush and was captured.

At this juncture Phocas was assassinated by his wife, who had already poisoned her father and her first husband, the Emperor Romanus. Her fellow-conspirator, the puny John Zimisces, who ascended the Byzantine throne, released Pandulf and propitiated Otto by sending over to Italy the desired princess Theophano, daughter of the triple murderess. She was wedded to the young co-Emperor and received the title of Empress. A year later, in May 973, Otto the Great, as he is called, died.

His successor, Otto II, was now a youth of seventeen. Without possessing the first Otto's masterful character, he certainly showed courage and vigour, and owed to his mother Adelheid a culture and refinement that was evidently lacking in his father. His reign of ten years was mainly occupied in fighting. First he was assailed by Henry of Bavaria, whom he defeated and deposed. Then he was attacked, and very nearly captured at Aachen, by Lothair of France; whereupon he led an army against Paris, and although he did not succeed in capturing it, he secured his undisturbed possession of Lorraine. Then he marched down into Italy, and after restoring a fugitive Pope and settling affairs at Rome, where violent discords between the imperial and papal parties had become chronic,[1] he opened (982) the campaign against the Saracens, who were still in possession of Sicily and had lately once more crossed over in great numbers into South Italy. Emboldened by success,

[1] Some of these interminable disorders are briefly noted in the List of Popes, p. 379. To recount them here at all fully is impossible.

Otto acted rashly and was surprised and totally defeated not far from Cotrone, the ancient Crotona, and would have been captured had he not swum out to a Byzantine vessel, whose crew luckily did not recognize him,[1] so that he was able to reach a friendly shore in safety. The news of this disaster caused great disturbances and dangerous rebellions in Otto's northern dominions, but he determined first to regain prestige in Italy. At Verona he convoked a great assembly of his nobles of both nations and caused his son, a child of three, to be elected King of Germany and Italy. He then made preparations to renew the war against the Saracens, and after vainly trying to persuade the Venetians to lend him a fleet, he marched once more down to Rome. Here he was attacked by fever and died. He was buried in an ancient sarcophagus which had a porphyry lid stolen from Hadrian's tomb. This sarcophagus stood for five centuries in the *Paradiso*, the great atrium of the old basilica, but when Paul V reconstructed the cathedral vaults, about 1610, the porphyry lid was taken to serve (as it still does) for a font, the old sarcophagus was given over to the kitchen of the Quirinal for a water-trough, and the body of the youthful Emperor was put into the marble and stucco coffin which now stands in the crypt (*Grotte Vecchie*) of St. Peter's, not far from the urns of 'King James III,' of England and his sons Charles Edward and Henry. A mosaic, probably first erected by the Empress Theophano, is still to be seen near Otto's tomb, and is a very interesting specimen of the degraded art of this period.

The child Otto III, born in 980, had been lately crowned at Aachen by the German nobles as King of Germany and of the Romans when the news of his father's death at Rome arrived. His mother, the 'Empress' Theophano, was made regent, and she proved herself worthy of the post, having evidently inherited more of the nature of her father, the Eastern Emperor Romanus, than of her mother's infamous character.

During the first six years of her regency we hear of little

[1] Except, it is said, a Slavonian, who did not betray him.

except that at Rome, as usual, fierce discords prevailed. One Pope (Benedict VI) had been imprisoned and strangled by the leaders of the populace; the next, Boniface VII, had fled from the imperialists to Constantinople; another (Benedict VII), driven out by the people and restored by Otto II, had been succeeded by John XIV, Bishop of Pavia and imperial chancellor. But Boniface returned from the East (985), deposed and poisoned, or starved to death, Pope John, and behaved with such intolerable cruelty that the populace rose, killed him, dragged his body through the streets, and cast it beneath the 'horse of Constantine,' namely the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius (see p. 338 *n*), the great imperial pagan philosopher, whose meditations would have been disturbed could he have foreseen the strange uses to which his monument would be put.

The leader of these tumults was Crescentius, whose father had held a similar position as head of the anti-German party. Crescentius assumed the ancient and princely title of Patrician of the Romans, and for some years was evidently as much the master of Rome as Alberich had been, and not only elected the next Pope (John XV, who reigned eleven years) but also expelled him when he proved recalcitrant. It is therefore somewhat surprising to find Theophano still at Rome in 989, and evidently recognized as 'Empress' both by Crescentius and this Pope; and even when, after her death and after the short regency of the dowager-Queen Adelheid, the young Otto, now sixteen years of age, came to Rome (996) to assume the imperial crown, Crescentius seems to have made no objection and to have received no castigation. But his fate was not to be deferred for long, as we shall see.

Before proceeding with the narrative, however, it will be well to say something about the personality of the young 'Saxon' monarch who reigned nineteen and lived twenty-two years. 'The Germans,' we are told by a recent writer on this period of Italian history, 'were big blond men, beer-drinkers, huge eaters, rough, ill-mannered, arrogant, phlegmatic, and brave.' Perhaps this is the picture that one is rather apt to

form when one hears of the 'Saxon' Ottos and their ilk. Perhaps too the description is fairly correct in the case of Otto the Great, who possessed, it is said, very little in the way of education, although, like Charles the Great, he was a zealous patron of learning [1] and a friend of scholars, such as the polyglot Liudprand. But it certainly is not correct in the case of the second Otto, who was an enthusiast for Southern culture and was in person probably dark and certainly small, as was proved when, as stated above, his body was removed from its sarcophagus. Still less does the description apply to the third Otto, though Gregorovius claims him as 'German from head to foot.' His mother, the Byzantine princess Theophano, descended from the Emperors Basil and Leo (the last notable as a philosopher), had imparted to him a temperament almost Oriental in its fantastic proclivities and had fostered his enthusiasm for Byzantine civilization as well as for the ideals of Eastern Christianity.

When Otto III, as a youth of sixteen, first came to Rome in 996, the Pope (John XV) had just died. He forthwith caused to be consecrated his own second-cousin, Bruno—a young man of twenty-three—who took the name Gregory V and three weeks later placed the imperial diadem on the head of his royal patron. He, the first German Pope, was not only a favourer of the reforms begun at Cluny (p. 334) but, like Otto himself, was strongly influenced by the enthusiasm for the monastic life which, as was natural at an epoch of such civic and religious disturbance, once more swept through Christendom, as it had done in earlier days. Several notable examples had of late excited imitation. St. Nilus, an illiterate Calabrian, who lived as hermit in a cave near Gaeta, was regarded by Otto, as by numberless other devotees, with unbounded veneration. St. Romuald of Ravenna, who some-

[1] Otto the Great is regarded, still more than his father Henry, as the establisher of the *German* Empire and of all that is essentially *deutsch*, including literature. The Germans were first in his reign officially called *Deutsche*, i.e. '*the* [elect] people.' See p. 159 *n*. Southern culture was at this time being rapidly introduced into Germany. Even school-girls, we are told, were taught to read Virgil and Terence.

what later founded the Reformed (or White) Benedictine Order of Camaldoli, was another who aroused immense enthusiasm, and was believed to have influenced Doge Pietro Orseolo to leave Venice by stealth, in the disguise of a pilgrim, and bury himself in a French monastery. A still deeper impression was made by Adalbert, the saintly and learned Bishop of Prag, who, after having devoted himself to the life of a recluse at Rome, was forced reluctantly to return to his Bohemian diocese, and at last sought and found a martyr's death among the savage heathen of Northern Poland.[1]

Under the ban of such influences the excitable and fantastic temperament of Otto led him into strange extravagances. At one time we find him as pilgrim visiting Monte Gargano and the relics of St. Bartholomew at Benevento,[2] and the tomb of St. Adalbert in the wilds of Poland, or devising a crusade to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the power of the Saracens—a design first realized a century later—and at another time we find him, in an access of fury and fanaticism, committing the most bloodthirsty atrocities. Specimens of such atrocities —the inhuman mutilation and murder of the Antipope John XVI, who had been set up by Crescentius in the place of Otto's cousin Gregory, and the execution of Crescentius himself and all the chief magistrates of Rome—I have reserved as evidence of the barbarity of the tenth century (see Part IV, ch. i). Another act that betokens a fantastic impulse is the opening of the tomb in Aachen Cathedral in which, tradition says, the body of Charles the Great sat enthroned in state. What Otto found, and what he did with what he found, it is impossible to know; we know however that he ordered that his own

[1] He was killed at Gnesen, which is now in Prussia. His tomb is in the cathedral, founded about 1000.

[2] St. Bartholomew is said to have voyaged in his marble sarcophagus from India to the Lipari Islands, where Saracens cast forth his body; but it found its way safely to Benevento, whence Otto tried to bring it to Rome. The Beneventans however deceived him and gave him the relics of St. Paulinus instead. Nevertheless the Romans insist on calling the church on the Isola Tiberina after St. Bartholomew and assert that his relics are there. This church was built, on the site of the ancient temple of Aesculapius, by Otto III, and at first was dedicated to St. Adalbert.

body should be entombed beside that of Charles at Aachen, and when, in 1003, he died near Rome they carried him thither, fighting their way through Italy, which was now in a state of open rebellion; for the last years of his reign had been spent in ever vainer efforts to realize his dream of a re-established Roman-Byzantine Empire in what he called the Eternal City and the one true capital of the world. Indeed so contemptuously had the Romans regarded his political designs and his religious enthusiasms that on his last visit to Rome they had treated him with insulting ridicule and had besieged him in his palace on the Aventine, so that it was with difficulty that he had persuaded them to let him depart unscathed. After retiring for a time to St. Romuald's monastery at Ravenna he determined, against the saint's urgent advice, to renounce the religious life and once more to attempt the establishment of his Roman Empire. But Rome itself had first to be regained, and while he hesitated to attack it he himself was attacked by fever and died in the castle of Paterno, near Mount Soracte. At this moment a Byzantine princess was voyaging to Italy in order to become his wife and the Empress of his dreamland realm. If we imagine her bending over his lifeless body we have a picture that strikingly symbolizes the non-fulfilment of his many ambitions.

Henry II, a Bavarian duke of the Saxon house, who succeeded Otto, had personally not much to do with Italy, but, as is the case with others of these German Kings of Italy and *Imperatores Romanorum*, his reign serves as a useful frame for events of importance. Otto's attempts to reconstruct in Italy an Empire of the Southern type had not only failed, but had excited a very strong anti-German feeling through the whole of the country. He had looked for support to the Church, and had favoured the power of the ecclesiastics by recognizing them as hereditary and immediate beneficiaries of the crown and as independent of other liege-lords. The nobles were by this deeply aggrieved and became ever more and more determined to shake off the foreign supremacy. In Rome, in spite of the imperial policy of the wise Pope Silvester II, formerly

30. S. Miniato
Florence

Otto's tutor, who had succeeded Otto's cousin Gregory, the son of that Crescentius whom Otto had executed held power as head of the lay aristocracy for ten years, till he was succeeded by the Counts of Tusculum, who dominated the city for a still longer period.[1] In North Italy, not only among the lay magnates but also in the numerous cities,[2] which were rapidly acquiring wealth and independence, the hostility to the Northern barbarian was so intense that a month after the death of Otto III Marquess Arduin of Ivrea (in Piemont) was crowned at Pavia with the iron crown of Lombardy.

Henry, who had already assumed the title of King of the Romans, answered the challenge by sending a small force, which was routed by Arduin. He then came himself with an army and was likewise crowned at Pavia with the iron crown as King of Italy; but how little his rights were founded on the will of the Italian people is proved by the fact that on the same evening a very serious tumult broke out, during which the Germans (*more Teutonico*) set fire to Pavia and destroyed a large part of the city.[3]

In Rome, as elsewhere, the republican movement was gathering force, and, in combination with the patriotism of Arduin's supporters, caused the Counts of Tusculum to ally themselves for a time with the Pope and the imperialists. The result was that Henry was invited to assume the diadem of the Empire, and together with his queen, Kunigund, he was crowned at Rome in 1014. Once more there were violent anti-German demonstrations and serious tumults; but they were suppressed by force, and the presence of the new Emperor

[1] This family had the disgrace of producing that most iniquitous, perhaps, of all the Popes, Benedict IX.

[2] Such as Venice, Florence, Pisa, Genoa, etc. The last two were powerful at sea and had successfully combated the Saracens of Sardinia and Spain. Milan and Pavia were much dominated by the Germans and had a long struggle for independence. In the south the republican spirit was extinguished by the Byzantines, Saracens, and Normans.

[3] Serious tumults, proving the same feeling and punished in the same barbarous fashion, took place at almost every future coronation of a German Roman Emperor.

and his powerful army so cowed King Arduin that he withdrew to a Benedictine monastery in Piemont, where he soon afterwards died.

During the next ten years events very little connected with Henry and his Germans, but most momentous for the future of Italy, took place in the south. Norman pilgrims,[1] returning from Jerusalem (*c.* 1016), had helped Salerno against the Saracens and had been enlisted by Melo of Bari against his fellow-subjects, the Byzantines. The Byzantines had defeated the rebel Melo and his Norman mercenaries at Canne (on the ancient battlefield of Cannae) and had recaptured their supremacy over most of Apulia and Calabria, and even over the cities of Naples, Capua, and Salerno.

This turn of events caused both Melo and also Pope Benedict VIII to undertake the journey to Germany in order to persuade Henry to come to the rescue; and he responded to their entreaties. With a large army he marched southwards and obtained some successes; but he was forced ere long to return to his northern dominions, where he died in 1024.

(4) The Franconian Emperors (1024–1125)

Both Otto III and Henry II died childless. The Germans elected as their king Conrad II of Franconia—the country of the Main, Würzburg, and Nürnberg. The reigns of the four Franconian Emperors, which extended over just a century (1024–1125), belong mainly to German history and need only be related here in so far as the history of Italy was affected by the attitude of the Italian people and of the Papacy towards these foreign monarchs, who regarded themselves, and were regarded, not only by their northern subjects but also by a certain number of their Italian vassals, lay and cleric, as possessing, by virtue of their coronation as German kings, a right to the iron crown of Lombardy and, as Emperors-designate, to the diadem of the Caesars. These rights however were fiercely denied by the great majority of the Italian people—a fact that is rendered luridly evident by the serious

[1] More about the Normans will be found in ch. ii of this Part.

tumults that almost invariably occurred at these coronations in Pavia, Milan, and Rome, and by the open hostility that not seldom opposed the descent into Italy of a German king.

But in order to thread the labyrinthine political complexities of this period, and to discover the real relations between the Germans and the Italians, it is necessary to secure certain clues, and this may perhaps be facilitated by the following remarks. Firstly, the hold that the German monarchs had on a part of the Italian people was greatly due to the fact that they favoured the lesser landholders (especially the clerical holders of *beneficia*) against the powerful nobles who claimed them as their private vassals. By declaring such beneficiaries to be direct feudatories of the crown and not sub-vassals of the great nobles they won them over to the imperialistic cause, and at the same time they thus increased very much the independence and power of the clerics and of a large class of the lay population. Secondly, Rome was constantly being visited by German monarchs and their warriors. The imperialist cause thus acquired a very considerable following. This caused constant broils and bloodshed, amidst which the aristocratic, the popular, and the papal partisans in turn appealed to the foreigner in order to get the better of their adversaries. Moreover, the Romans as well as other South Italians were frequently obliged to look to the German princes for aid against the Byzantines, the Saracens, or oppressive Lombard dukes. Lastly, in North Italy numerous cities were rapidly gaining independence as Communes, and attaining very considerable wealth and influence,[1] some of them as sea-powers, and these Communes naturally stood on the patriotic, anti-German side; but their rivalries often allowed or invited the interference of the foreigner, who was ever ready to intervene in such quarrels and draw profit therefrom.

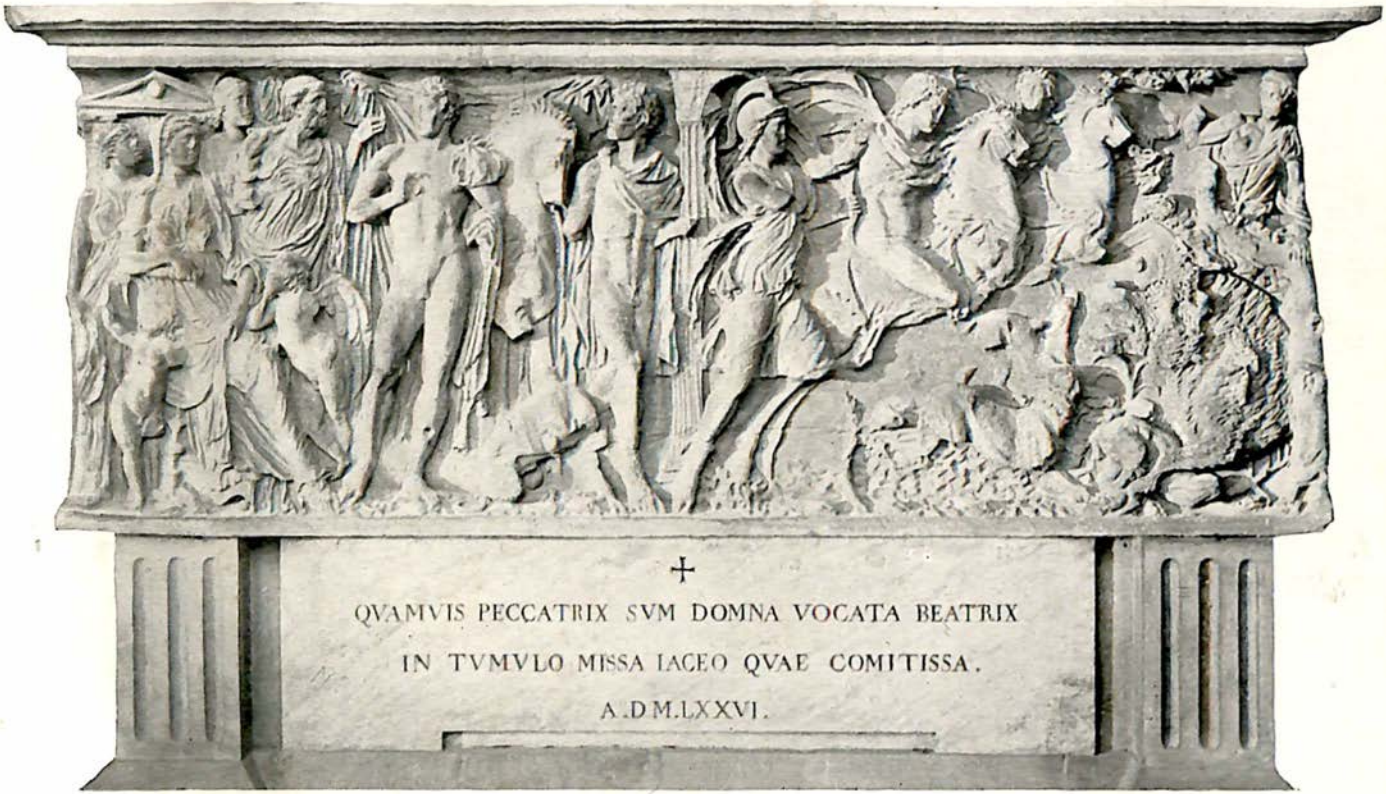
In this connexion it will be remembered that it was the

[1] The appearance of a splendid architecture during this period in the northern cities, and a little later in the Norman dominions, is, as we shall see, a very remarkable evidence of the progress of civilization and art where party strife did not ruin all such development—as it did at Rome.

favour of the Frankish and German Emperors (especially that of the three Ottos) which had lifted the Papacy to a position so formidable that it was finally able, by means of its temporal and its spiritual weapons, to defy and humiliate its patron. Now this defiance of the imperial power by the Church—first in the person of Aribert of Milan and then in that of Pope Hildebrand—is doubtless the fact that makes the reigns of these Franconian monarchs of most importance to us. I shall therefore dwell for a time on this fact, and then pass over the rest of these reigns with very few remarks, reserving such subjects as the coming of the Normans, the rise of the Communes, and the development of Romanesque architecture for fuller treatment in subsequent chapters.

Aribert had made himself master of the civil power in Milan, of which city he was the archbishop. His ambition seems to have aimed at making the Ambrosian Church independent of Rome. In order to forward his designs he invited Conrad II, and crowned him with the iron crown in the cathedral of S. Ambrogio at Milan. After a year's sojourn in North Italy, urged by his ambitious wife Gisela, Conrad proceeded (1027) to Rome, where they both were crowned with the imperial diadem in the presence of many princes, among whom was Canute (Knut), King of Denmark, Norway, and England.[1] For some time the Emperor remained in South Italy endeavouring to re-establish his authority. The state of disorder in these regions was almost incurable, constant war prevailing between Byzantines, Saracens, Lombards, and numerous cities, such as Naples and Capua, which under various rulers or under republican forms of government had made themselves independent; and the state of things was perhaps made worse by the fact that Norman adventurers, ever more and more in number, sold their services now to

[1] For details of this coronation, including the usual tumults, see explanation of the picture of the imperial diadem, Fig. 19. Knut had come as pilgrim. He wrote an enthusiastic description of Rome to his English subjects. I may notice here that some years later (1050) another famous person from the British Isles visited Rome as penitent, according to the chroniclers—namely, Macbeth! (He reigned eight years after murdering Duncan.)



31. Tomb of Beatrice, Mother of Countess Matilda
Pisa

one combatant and now to another. Conrad seems to have succeeded in reducing parts of the country temporarily to submission, for we find that he gave formal leave to the Normans to settle near Capua, and thus afforded them their first real *pied-à-terre* in Italy. North of the Alps his exploits in war were remarkable, one of them being the conquest and annexation of Burgundy. This he effected by the aid of a large force of Italian auxiliaries, and these Lombards and Tuscans, who reached Burgundy *via* the Great St. Bernard, Lake Leman, and Geneva, were led by the warlike and ambitious Archbishop Aribert of Milan and by Boniface, Marquess of Tuscany, father of that famous Countess Matilda whose celebrity rests about equally on her momentous 'Legacy' and the part that she perhaps takes in Dante's picture of the Earthly Paradise.[1]

Aribert now becomes almost an independent sovereign at Milan. Conrad, suspecting his loyalty, comes to Milan and arrests him. Great indignation is excited by this, and Aribert, having managed to escape, fortifies himself in the castle of Milan, and a battle is fought with indecisive result. Conrad, leaving his troops to besiege the rebel, goes to Rome and, after restoring the iniquitous Benedict IX to the papal throne,[2] persuades him to excommunicate Aribert. But the archbishop held out bravely at Milan—which city, by the way, he continued to rule for the next seven years—and the German troop was finally withdrawn to Parma, where it distinguished itself by sanguinary fights with the Italian populace and by setting fire, *more suo*, to the city. After another visit to the south, where he and his friend Pope Benedict undertook a somewhat fruitless campaign against the Byzantines and a certain Pandulf of Capua, who was proving troublesome,

[1] *Purg.* xxviii–xxxiii. Dante's 'Matelda' is a mystery. I cannot believe that she is Countess Matilda. For lineage see Azzo, Ugo, Boniface, Beatrice.

[2] The chief facts connected with this 'demon of hell,' as Gregorovius calls him, are given in the List of Popes (p. 379) and need not be repeated. When he fled from Rome to Cremona on this occasion (1037) he owed his life to a solar eclipse, which deterred the nobles who had vowed to kill him at the altar. At this time he was only sixteen, having ascended the papal throne when twelve years of age.

Conrad marched again northwards, with an army decimated by the plague and by fever. Then, leaving the siege of Milan to his Italian feudatories, he returned to Germany, where in 1039 he died, probably of the plague.

Henry III, Conrad's son and successor, reigned about seventeen years as King and ten as Emperor. At first he was much occupied by troubles in Hungary and Carinthia, and when at last, in 1046, he determined to visit Italy it was apparently not so much with the object of receiving the imperial diadem as for the purpose of putting an end to the scandalous state of things then prevailing at the papal court. He was of a religious temperament, ascetically inclined,[1] and earnestly in favour of Church reform such as was advocated by the monks of Cluny—even in favour of the bold proposal to introduce a 'truce of God' (*treuga Dei*) whereby all civil strife should be forbidden during four days of every week. What the state of things at Rome was like may be to some extent inferred from the facts given on p. 380. Probably never was it worse, not even in the days of the Borgias. Henry on his arrival in Italy held three Councils, at Pavia, at the old Etruscan town of Sutri, and at Rome. By these Councils the sale of the papal dignity by Benedict to Gregory was condemned as most heinous simony and all the three rival Popes were deposed. Silvester retired into a convent, Gregory was taken to Germany (and was accompanied by the monk Hildebrand, of whom we shall hear much later), and Benedict took refuge with his relatives at Tusculum. Henry then caused the German Bishop of Bamberg to be elected Pope, and by him was crowned Emperor on Christmas Day 1046.

But before a year had passed the German Pope, Clement II, was poisoned by agents of Benedict, who with the help of the Tuscan marquess, Boniface, for the third time ascended the papal throne. Henry deposed him again and nominated the German Bishop of Brixen; but after a reign of twenty-three days also this Pope (Damasus II) died suddenly, probably

[1] He is said never to have put on the diadem without having made confession and done penance—frequently under the lash.

poisoned by Benedict's agents. Again Henry caused a German to be elected, the Bishop of Lothringian Toul. Benedict now seems to have at last renounced his claims. His end is unknown. A charitable chronicler hints that he turned recluse and died in the odour of sanctity. Others state that he 'continued to live as a beast.' It was popularly believed that he held secret conferences with Satan in the depths of a dark wood.

The Lothringian bishop, who had entered Rome with bare feet (accompanied by monk Hildebrand as his counsellor), proved as Pope Leo IX an earnest reformer, and undertook zealously the labour of cleansing the Augean mews of Rome. He also visited some of the chief European cities in order to forward reform and denounce abuses, such as simony and the marriage of the clergy.[1]

Here it will be well to turn our attention to the fact that to the north of Rome, and also to the south, influences had arisen which, still more than the isolated city Communes, seemed likely to endanger the German supremacy. In the north the powerful Boniface, Marquess of Tuscany, who has been already mentioned as the father of Countess Matilda, was showing an evident desire to dispute the claims of the foreign overlord. His grandfather, Azzo, had owned Canossa Castle—soon to become so famous—and here had hospitably received the fugitive princess Adelheid, whom Otto the Great married.[2] Azzo and his son Ugo were consequently much favoured, and soon received very extensive *beneficia*, including the cities of Mantua, Brescia, Modena, and Reggio. From Conrad II Boniface received the Marquisate of Tuscany and, as we have seen, aided him in his conquest of Burgundy; but latterly he had developed ambitious schemes and had allied himself

[1] Doubtless, being under a ban, the marriage of the clergy, even when legalized, led to abuses which would not have existed if it had been recognized as a Christian institution. But celibacy was, of course, insisted upon by Popes such as Hildebrand, not for moral, but for political reasons: to secure a clergy devoted solely to papal interests.

[2] See p. 335 *n*. The ruins of Canossa still exist, on a height some fifteen miles south-west of Reggio, and rather farther from Parma.

with opponents of the Empire, even with that iniquitous wretch Benedict IX.

The other hostile power was that of the Normans. Their story is told in another place. Here a few facts will suffice.

After they had been allowed by Conrad II to settle in the province of Capua, the town of Aversa became their chief stronghold. About ten years later (*c.* 1040) arrived, among many other Norman adventurers, some of the numerous sons of Tancred d'Hauteville, and the power of the Norman warriors, who constantly seized new territory and frequently changed sides among the various combatants (Byzantines, Lombards, Dukes of Naples, etc.), became so formidable that the people of Benevento applied to Pope Leo IX and gave over their city to him[1] on condition that he should procure aid for them against these troublesome foes. Leo accepted. He at once started for Germany, and was able to procure a few soldiers of fortune from Henry. With these and his own troops he was marching southwards down the Adriatic coast when near the promontory of Gargano he was met by the Normans, among whose leaders was now the famous Robert Guiscard, and was totally defeated and taken prisoner. But the victors, says Villari, vanquished by reverence, cast themselves on their knees before him, supplicating his forgiveness; then they took him to Benevento, where for six months they retained him as hostage! He probably bought his release by promising to invest them with the sovranty of Apulia, Calabria, and even Sicily—which still belonged to the Moslems.

Leo IX died shortly after this disaster. Henry straightway nominated once more a German—the Bishop of Eichstadt (Victor II). It will be noted that this was the fourth Pope nominated by the Emperor and elected without any open opposition by the people and clerics of Rome. No wonder if these German monarchs began to regard the investiture of Popes and bishops as a right inherent in the imperial, or even the kingly, dignity.

Henry accompanied his Pope-designate to Italy. He had

[1] Benevento remained under the overlordship of the Popes until 1860.

begun to be very anxious about the machinations of Marquess Boniface, and the death of Boniface (1052) had not relieved his anxiety, for the widow married another of his adversaries, namely Godfrey of Lothringen. After the wedding Godfrey had returned to his northern domains, and in order to nip rebellion in the bud the Emperor seized the persons of Beatrice and her daughter Matilda and carried them both off to Germany. Shortly afterwards, in October 1056, he died.

His son, Henry IV, a child of six years, was proclaimed king under the regency of his mother Agnes. In order to use his long reign of fifty years as a kind of framework wherein to insert sketches of some of the very numerous and varied scenes that make up the history of Italy of these days it will be well to divide it into four periods.

(1) For six years (from 1056 to 1062) the dowager-Empress Agnes holds the regency with ever-increasing difficulty against many rebellions. Then Anno, Archbishop of Cöln, kidnaps the youthful king and makes himself regent. (Agnes retires to a convent and dies later at Rome.) Then the Bremen archbishop obtains the regency. In 1066 Henry, being now of age, assumes the government and rules vigorously and despotically, making many enemies. In 1073 there is a great revolt of the Saxons, and Henry is abandoned by nearly all the German nobles. The cities however (especially the Rhine cities, such as Worms) support him, and after much bloodshed he at last gains some footing, and might have consolidated his power had he not, perhaps unwisely, taken up the challenge of the Papacy.

(2) From 1073 to 1084 rages the long and dramatic 'War of the Investitures' between Henry and Hildebrand. The chief events of this period are the humiliation of the excommunicated king—now a young man of twenty-seven—at Canossa in 1077, his victory over his rival, Rudolf of Suabia, and his final triumph and coronation at Rome (1084), followed by the rescue of the Pope and the sack of Rome by Robert Guiscard and his Normans and Saracens.

(3) From 1085 to 1095 Henry rules his northern dominions

with some success and, except for a short campaign against Matilda of Tuscany in 1090, when he captures Mantua and other cities, has scarcely anything to do with Italy.

(4) From 1095 to his death in 1106 Henry's existence is embittered by the rebellion of his sons. First the elder, Conrad, is won over by the papal party and the Tuscan court and is crowned at Monza and afterwards in S. Ambrogio at Milan as King of Italy. Then his younger and well-loved son, Henry—a cold-blooded, calculating wretch—is also seduced by the priests and Countess Matilda, and after deposing his brother Conrad (who dies in 1101) is joined by most of the South German nobles. Once more the Rhineland cities prove loyal to the king and the young rebel is induced to crave forgiveness. His father meets him at Coblenz, embraces him with tears, and trustfully follows him to one of his castles (Böckelheim, in the Nahe valley), where he is caught, as in a trap, and is forced to promise abdication. He, however, manages to escape, and again collects forces to oppose his unnatural son; but ere long he dies. The body of the still excommunicated king was buried at Lüttich (Liège), but was ejected thence by the priests and, after resting for a time on an island of the river Maas, was brought to Speyer, the immense Romanesque cathedral at which place he had lately finished building. For five years (till 1111) the corpse remained 'above the earth,' probably in an upright position, in the side-chapel of St. Afra, but finally the ban was removed and it was entombed.[1]

Now during the first two of these four periods some very important occurrences took place in various parts of Italy. But these will be related when we turn our attention to the rise of the Communes and to the story of the coming of the Normans. Here I shall limit myself to some of the causes and events of the great 'War of the Investitures.'

The German Pope, Victor II, whom Henry III had nominated

[1] Here are buried (since 1900 mostly in new sarcophagi in the restored vault) Conrad II, Henry III, Henry IV, Henry V, Philip, Rudolf von Habsburg, Adolf, and Albrecht; also Gisela (see p. 348).

(1054) had been charitable or politic enough to attempt a reconciliation between the German and the Tuscan courts. The dowager-Empress Agnes was persuaded to release Countess Beatrice and her daughter Matilda, whom Henry had taken as hostages to Germany, and to allow Duke Godfrey of Lorraine to return to his wife and stepdaughter at Florence. On Victor's death Godfrey's brother, abbot of Monte Cassino, was made Pope (Stephen IX), and all seemed to promise well. But the Pope suddenly died at Florence, probably poisoned by agents of the Roman nobility, and these nobles at once elected one of the Counts of Tusculum (Benedict X). Thereupon Godfrey and Beatrice, with the consent of the Empress and the counsel of monk Hildebrand and of another zealous reformer and ascetic, Pietro Damiano of Ravenna,[1] chose the Bishop of Florence, who as Pope Nicholas II established himself successfully at Rome, causing his rival Benedict to take to flight.

Thus the new party of reform, led by the untiring energy and zeal of Hildebrand, was now in the ascendant. Nominally the motive of this party was—as had been the case with the first Cluny reformers, and as it was thirty years later with St. Romuald and his reformed Benedictines of Camaldoli, and also with the Vallombrosans and Carthusians[2]—indignation against the gross immorality and simony of the clerics; but in the case of men such as Hildebrand the primary motive was without any doubt chiefly political. By insisting on celibacy (the worst of all methods for combating immorality) such supporters of the Papacy hoped to secure the loyalty of a large class that had no other ties and had given no hostages to fortune—*staccata*, as Balzani says, *da ogni cura d'affetti mondani*; and they revolted against lay investiture not merely for such reasons as have led men to found Free

[1] Met by Dante in Paradise (xxi, 121), where he utters fierce Miltonic invectives against the *moderni pastori*. His copious writings in prose and in verse are a strange medley of mysticism, asceticism, and polemics.

[2] Less with the Cistercians and St. Bernard; and I do not add either Domenic or St. Francis, for Domenic's fiery fanaticism was directed against intellectual heresy and St. Francis, 'all seraphical in ardour,' influenced hearts rather than systems.

Churches, but because the act of investiture was accompanied by the bestowal of benefices (fiefs) which bound the cleric as feudatory to his imperial overlord. Henry, for instance, in his contest with the Papacy and the higher nobility was able to look for support to a large number of his bishops and abbots whom he claimed as his direct vassals.

Both Nicholas II and his successor, Alexander II (Bishop Anselm of Lucca), had been elected by the Cardinals without the sanction of Agnes or Henry. They were nominees of Hildebrand, and by his instigation they passed decrees forbidding the marriage of clergy and giving the Cardinals, in concert with the clergy and the people of Rome, the sole right to elect Popes. And when in 1073 Hildebrand himself ascended the papal throne as Gregory VII he did not long hesitate before issuing what was practically a declaration of war against Henry; for by his Council of 1075 he caused to be passed a decree vehemently condemning as simony investiture by laymen, declaring null the bestowal by King or Emperor of ring and staff, deposing those bishops whom Henry had instituted and excommunicating several of them, as well as certain of Henry's officials to whom these prelates had, he alleged, paid money for favouring their appointment.

In great indignation Henry assembled a council of his ecclesiastics at Worms, and, doubtless keenly mindful of the prerogative claimed and exercised by his own father, sent word to inform Gregory that he was deposed. 'Henry, King, not by usurpation, but by the holy will of God, to Hildebrand, no longer Pope, but a false monk.' So the letter was addressed; and it ended thus: 'I, Henry, King by God's grace, and all my bishops say to thee: *Down, down, thou damned for all eternity!*'

Hildebrand's answer was excommunication. In his writings he has asserted [1] that the Pope has authority over all princes of the earth and that he has the power of deposing even

[1] The eight books of his Registers are praised by Balzani as worthy of comparison with the writings of Gregory the Great. Words fail the Count in his enthusiastic admiration for Hildebrand's character.

Emperors: *illi licet imperatores deponere.* But to display the courage of his opinion in this hitherto unheard-of fashion was an audacious act. Nevertheless it was astoundingly successful, for the German nobles, glad of the excuse, held an assembly at Tribur, near Mainz, and informed Henry that unless he obtained remission of the ban within the year (viz. by February 2, 1077) they would renounce their fealty. There remained but one course open to him. Accompanied by his wife and by the excommunicated bishops and officials, he crossed the Alps in the depth of winter in order to make his peace with the pontiff. In Lombardy, it is said, many offered their services, inciting him to resistance; but he was determined to carry out his resolution, and as a barefoot suppliant clad in sackcloth he arrived at Matilda's ancestral castle of Canossa (p. 351), whither Gregory had withdrawn when he had heard of the proffer of help made to the king by the Lombard cities. For three days Henry and his companions, it is said, were kept waiting amidst the snow outside the portal of the inner court. When at last he was admitted he threw himself on his knees, and finally received forgiveness and was allowed once more to taste the sacramental wafer, promising to regard himself as dethroned until re-elected by the nobles and people of the realm. The contempt of the German nobles at this self-abasement excited again a widespread rebellion, and Rudolf of Suabia, Henry's brother-in-law, was proclaimed king. But Henry acted with vigour and courage, and was aided by Frederick of Staufen, the first notability of that illustrious house, afterwards son-in-law of Henry and Duke of Suabia. A battle was fought (October 1080) at Merseburg, the town near Leipzig already famous for the struggle of Henry I against the Hungarians. Here Rudolf was killed, it is said, by Godfrey of Bouillon, who was made Duke of Suabia in Rudolf's stead, and in later days won world-wide renown as the Crusader *che 'l gran sepolcro liberò di Cristo* and refused to wear a kingly crown in the city where the King of Kings had worn a crown of thorns.

These acts had revived Henry's feud with the Pope, who

again deposed and excommunicated him, recognizing Rudolf as king. Henry at once responded by holding another council of his bishops, this time at Mainz, and again deposing Gregory, in whose stead he caused Wibert, Archbishop of Ravenna, to be elected. After the victory at Merseburg he descended into Italy, assumed the iron crown at Pavia, besieged Rome thrice (his army suffering much from malaria), and towards the end of 1082 forced his way into the Leonine quarter. Gregory took refuge in the mighty stronghold of the Castle of S. Angelo. In 1083 Henry crossed the Tiber, seized the Lateran, and summoned all the nobles and clerics of Rome (including Gregory, who did not appear) to a council, which confirmed the election of Wibert as Pope; and at Easter of the year 1084 in St. Peter's basilica this new Pope, known generally as the Antipope Clement, crowned Henry and his queen Bertha as Emperor and Empress.

All this time Pope Gregory was safely ensconced in the huge fortress of S. Angelo and was waiting for succour. This succour he expected, and not vainly, from the Normans, who had by this time under various leaders, and especially under Robert Guiscard, established themselves permanently in South Italy and had become a formidable power. They had, as will be remembered, totally defeated Leo IX and had made him prisoner. But a few years later (1060) Pope Nicholas II seems to have sanctioned the usurpations and conquests of the Northmen and to have made promises of investing them with the sovranty of Calabria and even of Sicily—as soon as they could conquer it from the Saracens—and in 1080 Robert Guiscard, invested as Duke of Apulia and Calabria by Hildebrand, had sworn fealty to him as his feudatory and had confirmed the claims of the Papacy to Benevento.

This clever stroke of papal policy had made the Normans a mainstay of the Papacy. It might well be asked by what right the Popes claimed to be overlords of the Apulian and Calabrian duchies—to say nothing of Sicily, which was still in the power of the Saracens. But, even if their right was founded on nothing more solid than the fictitious Donation

'of Constantine, the result of their diplomacy was real enough; for in response to Gregory's despairing appeal Robert Guiscard marched on Rome with about 40,000 men, among whom were many Saracen mercenaries. Three days before his arrival Henry had prudently withdrawn northwards, promising to return with a large army. The Normans forced their way into the city and it was given over to pillage (May 1084). On no former occasion, it is said, did Rome suffer so terribly from its captors. The destruction of innumerable monuments and of many fine churches (S. Clemente among them) is attributed to Robert Guiscard's Saracens. As for Pope Gregory, he was released from his long confinement in the Mole of Hadrian, but found it advisable to leave Rome with his rescuers, and died during the next year at Salerno. His last words are often quoted by his admirers: *Dilexi justitiam, odi iniquitatem; propterea morior in exilio.* The assertion does not seem remarkably original or remarkably true.

During the third period of Henry's reign (1085–95) only a few events took place that need here be chronicled. At Rome there were, as so often, constantly recurring disorders caused by the never-ending broils between the various clerical and lay factions. The facts given in the List of Popes will perhaps suffice as an index to these disturbances. The election of Urban II, a French monk of Cluny and Bishop of Ostia, who vigorously forwarded the policy of Hildebrand, is noticeable both on account of his impious instigation of Conrad against his father and because of the fame that he has acquired by his advocacy of the first Crusade. Three years after his election he was for a time forced to flee from Rome because, when Henry undertook a successful raid on Tuscany, the Romans, fearing his vengeance, made themselves masters of S. Angelo and invited the Antipope Clement to return. But Clement's triumph was brief, and in 1093 Urban resumed his seat on the throne of the Lateran. Other and perhaps more important occurrences, which will be related in a subsequent chapter, were the brilliant exploits of Robert Guiscard and his Normans in Dalmatia, his death in 1085, and the final overthrow of the

Saracens and the conquest of Sicily by his brother, Count Roger, in 1091.

Of the fourth period (1095–1106) the most momentous event —one of almost world-wide influence—was doubtless the first Crusade. It affected Italy more than Germany, where, says Müller, 'one gazed astounded at the savage hordes of hermits streaming past,' and where the deplorable feud between Henry and his sons prevented any large participation in the wild enthusiasm aroused by the preaching of Peter of Amiens; but Italy itself was not swept by the tornado that half-depopulated France.[1] Although several Popes, among them the German Leo IX, had expressed the longing to liberate Christ's sepulchre, the proposal to realize the design, being evidently due to the French reformers of Cluny, had perhaps failed to inspire the Italians when at Piacenza and afterwards at Clermont Urban the Frenchman proclaimed the Crusade. Possibly too in the Communes, such as Genoa, Pisa, and Venice, the anxiety for their vastly extended trade chilled the ardour of fanaticism. Perhaps also the near presence of the Moslems in Sicily and the hostility of the Normans against the Eastern Emperor (who sent envoys to the Council of Piacenza to beg help against the Turks) checked the movement in South Italy. But not a few Italian Normans did join in the Crusade, among whom Bohemund, Guiscard's eldest son, was conspicuous, and Italy gave valuable aid in transporting immense numbers of Crusaders, who passed through Rome and took ship at Bari, and were consternated at the state of heathen savagery that they found in the metropolis of Christianity.

We now pass to the reign of Henry V. His relations with the Papacy were at first apparently friendly, but ere long he too found that the right of investiture, which secured him the fealty of his bishops, was indispensable, and as Pope Paschal obstinately refused to concede this right, the king crossed the Alps (1110) with his army. The Lombard towns, except

[1] Six millions are said to have taken the red cross. A vast multitude followed Peter and almost wholly perished before the real host of the Crusaders left Europe.

Milan and Pavia, acknowledged him, and even at Florence he was received by the Countess Matilda, who some twenty years before, at the age of forty-three, had taken as second husband a young man of eighteen—the heir of the Bavarian ducal family of the Welfs, or Guelfs, who were resolute allies of the Popes and adversaries of the Franconian Emperors.[1]

Pope Paschal was in difficulties. He could look for help neither to Matilda and her Tuscans nor to the Normans of South Italy, who were just then under the rule of the weak and sickly William, grandson of Robert Guiscard. He therefore agreed to sign a compact by which the Church should renounce the temporal while retaining the ecclesiastical rights of investiture, and consented to crown Henry as Emperor. But when the document was read to the clerics and nobles assembled to view the coronation in St. Peter's a violent tumult arose, and Henry found it advisable to make prisoners of the Pope and sixteen cardinals and take them off to Tivoli. Finally Pope Paschal yielded. He signed a *Privilegium* by which he conceded to the king the right of investiture 'with ring and staff,' and in April 1111 the coronation that had been so roughly interrupted was consummated.

Henry V was now at the acme of his good fortune, and he strengthened his influence by marrying (1113) an English princess—Maud, or Matilda, daughter of Henry I, who afterwards became the wife of Geoffrey Plantagenet and the mother of Henry II of England.

In 1115 Countess Matilda died, at the age of sixty-nine. Her juvenile husband had left her long ago, and she had no legal heir. She left almost all her possessions to the Roman Church. But, whatever right she may have had to bequeath her freehold (allodial) property, she certainly had none to

[1] The Guelfs and Ghibellines derived their names from these Bavarian 'Welfen' and from the 'Waiblinger,' *i.e.* the anti-papal and afterwards imperial family of the Hohenstaufer, whose founder had been made Duke of Suabia by Henry IV (p. 357), and who took their name from their castle on the 'High Staufen' (2000 feet), some twelve miles east of Stuttgart. They were also called 'Waiblinger' from the village of Waiblingen in the same district.

bequeath to any but a legal heir the hereditary fiefs that she held (illegally, it was affirmed, being a woman and a rebel) as a feudatory of the crown. And even if we assume that her title as independent ruler was confirmed by the Tuscan people, she assuredly had not the power to hand over the country, with or without sovran rights, to the Popes, or to anybody else. The Legacy however brought good as well as evil in its train, for, although Tuscany was hereafter much worried and mauled by Popes and Emperors, several of the Tuscan cities used the opportunity to throw off their vassalage and to declare themselves independent. The history of the Florentine republic begins with the death of Countess Matilda.

In 1117, as these Tuscan cities refused to receive Henry's Vicars and as Pope Paschal had recanted his *Privilegium*, the king again crossed the Alps with an army. He seems to have feared to attack the allied Communes, and made straight for Rome, determined to exact not only a confirmation of his privileges but also a repetition of the ceremony of coronation. Pope Paschal however had taken flight. Henry therefore induced a cardinal to crown him, and departed. But on the death of Paschal he came hurrying back and caused this cardinal (Burdino) to be elected Pope—or rather Antipope, for the Roman people had already elected Gelasius II. Great tumults ensued. Finally, Gelasius having died in exile at Cluny, an able and resolute anti-imperialist was consecrated by the cardinals assembled at Vienne, in France. This Pope, who was Archbishop of Vienne and related to the French king and to Henry, took the name of Calixtus II. He forthwith excommunicated Henry's Antipope and also Henry himself, and this bold move was successful, for the Antipope came to a pitiable end [1] and Henry, wearied out by opposition at home and abroad, at last accepted the agreement (Concordat) drawn up by a Council held at Worms in 1122.

By the terms of the Concordat Henry V renounced the right

[1] Betrayed and captured, this ex-cardinal was exhibited in the streets of Rome seated backwards on a camel and clothed in a shaggy goatskin. He was then expelled, and died in misery in some convent.

of electing prelates and investing them 'with ring and staff.' His envoy was allowed to be present at the investiture; but this was an empty form. He was also allowed to bestow, by a touch of his sceptre, the temporalities—that is, to give over the lands and revenues of the office to the newly elected dignitary —often no very valuable kingly privilege. Altogether kingship was a considerable loser by this Concordat. The demesnes of the great nobles were originally conquered or confiscated lands for which, as being a loan (*Lehen*), they owed fealty to the crown; but by letting out estates to tenants (*subinfeudation*) or promising protection in return for vassalage (a process called *recommandation*) these great nobles had secured a very large class of private vassals, who professed to owe no fealty to the king. This state of things was energetically opposed by the German kings (as also by our Norman kings), but with small success. They therefore relied to a great extent on the bishops and other Church dignitaries whom they elected, and who were their feudatories in virtue of the vast ecclesiastical benefices which composed a great deal of the landed property in the realm. But by the Worms Concordat the king lost the power of electing men devoted to his interests, and the kingly power suffered greatly from this extension of papal prerogative.[1]

(5) The Hohenstaufen Emperors

Both Calixtus and Henry V died not long after the Concordat of Worms. Henry was childless, and once more the nobles (most of whom were glad enough to exercise their powers as electors and thus protest against a hereditary kingship) assembled at Tribur. Frederick of Staufen, son of that Frederick who had been made Duke of Suabia by Henry IV

[1] In this connexion the following passage is full of interest: 'William [the Conqueror] enforced his supremacy over the Church. Homage was exacted from bishop as from baron. No synod could legislate without his assent. . . . He was the one ruler of his time who dared firmly to repudiate the claims . . . of the court of Rome. When Gregory VII called on him to do fealty for his realm, the king sternly refused to admit the claim. *Fealty*, he said, *I have never willed to do, nor will I do it now.*' (Green's *Short History*, ii, 5.)

and had married his daughter, was the foremost claimant; but the Concordat was already bearing its fruit, and the archbishops together with the anti-imperial nobles succeeded in rejecting both Frederick and his brother Conrad as being 'too full of the Waibling spirit.' A devoted son of the Church, the former leader of the Saxon and Welf rebels, was chosen, Lothair (Lothar) by name. Frederick at first refused to give up certain royal demesnes which he claimed through his mother, but finally the Staufen family agreed to recognize the new king—not however until Conrad had been recognized as King of Italy and Emperor-designate by the people of Milan (1130) and had been crowned with the iron crown at Monza. In 1133 Lothair went to Rome. Here there had been, as so often, serious disturbances caused by the election of rival Popes. One was Innocent II, the nominee of the powerful family of the Frangipani; the other was Anacletus, of the old Jewish-Roman family of the Pierleoni, monk of Cluny and disciple of the famous Abelard of Paris. Anacletus had gained the mastery at Rome and Innocent had fled to France, where he was strongly supported by St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who was a vehement opponent of Abelard and his teachings. St. Bernard was commissioned by Louis of France to decide between the rival Popes, and naturally enough decided against Anacletus. But force was needed in order to restore Innocent, and the orthodox Lothair undertook the task, and incidentally had himself crowned Emperor at Rome by Pope Innocent (1133). His pious gratitude for this favour induced him to accept investiture from the Pope for his sovran rights over the quondam territories of Matilda—thus acknowledging the validity of Matilda's Legacy and degrading himself to a vassal of the Papacy.

Roger the Norman of Sicily, who had proclaimed himself king in 1130, had been recognized by Anacletus, but not by Innocent. He now began to make himself master of the south of Italy, and Innocent appealed to Lothair, who came with his army and with Genoese and Pisan ships, and, being aided by the revolted cities of Naples and Capua, was able to chase

Roger back to Sicily. But ere long Lothair and his army disappeared northwards, and when news came of his death (he died in December 1137, soon after crossing the Alps) Roger returned and not only reconquered all that he had lost, but defeated and captured Innocent and by generous treatment gained at last the confirmation of his kingly title.

The Welf Duke of Bavaria and Saxony, Henry the Proud, to whom Lothair had given over in mesne-tenure the territories of Matilda, and who was thus master of a vast realm, expected to be elected king and had already possessed himself of the royal insignia. But once more the German people shrank from choosing a too powerful candidate and from perpetuating the claims of either rival house. Even before the diet met at Tribur the Waiblinger, Conrad of Staufen, was proclaimed and crowned, and Duke Henry found it advisable to surrender the insignia; and ere long he had to surrender also his Saxon duchy, for the fierce outbursts of the Welf and Waibling feud that distracted the nation during these years ended at last in favour of Conrad.

Amid such disturbances it was not likely that Conrad III should have much to do with Italy; but it will be remembered that while competing with Lothair for the German crown he had succeeded, although he was excommunicated, in persuading the Archbishop of Milan to crown him with the iron crown, as King of Italy and Emperor-designate. It was therefore naturally his ambition to realize his claims to these titles, and later we shall find him attempting to do so. Meanwhile however Rome again claims our attention.

The republican movement, which was already effecting great results in the north of Italy, had been seriously counteracted in the south by the conquests of the Normans. In Rome itself, although fiercely suppressed by powerful families, such as those of the Tusculan counts, the Crescenzi and the Frangipani, and by such Popes as were the tools of the aristocratic and the imperialistic factions, the spirit of liberty had asserted itself so far that the civil government of the city was already to a great extent that of a Commune,

the army, divided into twelve *scholae* corresponding to the twelve divisions of Rome, being together with its twelve commanders (*banderesi*) under popular control. But a sudden and violent outburst of feeling was now to develop Rome for a time into a full-blown republic. The little town of Tibur (Tivoli), whose love of freedom had deeply annoyed the freedom-lovers in Rome, had been mastered, but obstinately refused to submit to the Roman people, on the ground that the Pope was the one supreme Roman authority; and when Pope Innocent publicly supported this theory a revolution took place: the Republic was proclaimed, the Prefecture abolished, and the Senate, reconstructed mainly of burghers instead of patricians, was installed on the Capitol.[1] In the same year (1143) Innocent died, and also his successor, Celestin II. The next Pope, Lucius II, received a fatal blow from a stone while attempting to storm the Capitol at the head of a band of nobles; his successor, Eugenius III, elected during the very same day, had to flee from Rome.[2] As Consul or chief senator of the new republic was chosen Giordano, apparently a renegade member of the aristocratic family of the Pierleoni, for he was, it is said, a brother of the Antipope Anacletus. Under his presidency the resuscitated Roman Republic seems to have established itself on a fairly firm basis, from which even the combined efforts of Barbarossa and Breakspear failed to dislodge it. To judge from its coinage, in its earlier days it recognized the Emperor as its overlord, but allowed

[1] It was a few years later that Arnold of Brescia persuaded the Romans to rebuild the Capitol. Amidst the desolation of its mighty ruins the 'Novum Palatium' (*Palazzo del Senatore*) arose on the mass of the ancient Tabularium. In documents of 1150 this New Palace is mentioned as the assembly-place of the republican Senate. It was here that Petrarch was crowned (1341). The fine flight of steps from the Piazza del Campidoglio was designed by Michelangelo, who rebuilt much of this part of the Capitol and removed hither the famous equestrian statue of M. Aurelius (see p. 338).

[2] He was consecrated in the Abbey of Farfa. This powerful monastic centre in the Sabine country, rivalling Monte Cassino, had been destroyed by the Saracens, but was rebuilt and became so notorious for immorality that Alberich had tried to reform it forcibly. Eugenius, after various attempts to establish himself in Rome, withdrew to France, preached the Crusade, and vented his wrath by excommunicating Arnold.

the Pope no part in the government, insisting that he should renounce all temporal power and content himself with tithes and oblations.

This revolution was formerly believed to have been incited and led by Arnold of Brescia; but it seems certain that, although his doctrines had already spread through the whole of Italy [1] and doubtless exercised very great influence on the Roman republicans, he himself was not present in 1143, since he first came to Rome in 1145.

Arnold, a native of Brescia, had studied under Abelard at Paris and had imbibed intense enthusiasm for ancient Rome and for republican liberty. On his return to Italy he became friar and preached fervidly against all forms of tyranny, and especially against the temporal power of the Popes, his favourite text being apostolic poverty, such as St. Benedict praised when Dante met him in heaven:

Pier cominciò senz' oro e senz' argento,
Ed io con orazione e con digiuno.

But Arnold's eloquence was received coldly, even in Brescia, and he returned to France, where his master Abelard was succumbing under the attacks of St. Bernard; and the angry saint, having crushed the heresiarch, turned on the disciple. Arnold was expelled, and seems to have spent some years, perhaps as a teacher, in Zurich—afterwards the home of a more successful theologian, Zwingli. In 1145 we find him in Rome, where his political theories were being largely put into practice. For ten years his zeal and learning inspired and guided the young republic, and, had his highest ideal been realized—the ideal of a truly apostolic Papacy, enthroned far above all greed of worldly wealth and power—how many centuries of misery would Italy, and humanity, have been spared! But the cowardly vacillation of Conrad and the blind policy of Barbarossa in his earlier days, exploited by the overweening ambition of an English Pope, frustrated what might

[1] They had been formally condemned in 1139 by the same Lateran Council which accepted St. Bernard's condemnation of Anacletus.

have proved a more salutary and radical reformation than that of Luther's age.

In 1147 the second Crusade, due greatly to the preaching of St. Bernard, attracted a million fighters from Western Europe. It created more enthusiasm in Germany than the first Crusade had done, and Conrad III finally determined to join it. For two years he was in the East, and it is interesting to note that in his retinue were two warriors whose names awake in our minds two very vivid but very different trains of reminiscence. One of these was his nephew, the young Frederick of Staufen (Barbarossa), who many years afterwards returned, as a Crusader, to these Eastern lands and died there. The other was an ancestor of Dante—his great-grandfather, Cacciaguida—who when he met the poet in the heaven of Mars (*Par.* xv) told him that on earth he had 'followed the Emperor Conrad,' who 'begirt him of his chivalry,' *i.e.* knighted him.

But this 'imperador Currado' was never crowned Emperor. When, in 1149, he returned from the East the Roman senators, possibly on the advice of Arnold, sent him several grandiloquent epistles. The last of these, which is interlarded with barbarous hexameters, addressed him as 'Lord of the City and the whole World' and as 'King of the Romans' and 'Augustus,' and besought him to come and re-establish the glories of the Roman Empire as it was under Constantine and Justinian, before it was ruined by the Popes and the nobles. It intimated also, rightly enough, that the Roman people, and not the Pope, was the true donor of the imperial dignity.

But Conrad hesitated. He had neither the wisdom nor the courage to accept the offer. At length he wrote that he would come 'to re-establish order, to strengthen the loyalty of his friends and to punish rebels'—a somewhat ambiguous reply, which filled the republican party with apprehensions. And these apprehensions were greatly increased when it was heard that Conrad had made overtures to Pope Eugenius, who had come back from France and had been for the last three years wandering about from place to place in Latium.

Finally Conrad, having overmastered certain troublesome Welf insurgents in Germany, wrote—not to the Senate, which he ignored, but to the newly reinstituted Prefect and other magistrates—and made known his intention of visiting Rome and being crowned, not by senatorial delegates, but by the Pope. This intention was, however, not carried out, for he died in February of 1152, before the preparations for his journey were complete.

Conrad left a son only eight years old. He therefore recommended the electors to choose his nephew and fellow-Crusader, Frederick of Staufen, now thirty-one years of age. Frederick's policy as regards Italy was soon revealed. When the Roman Senate sent him, as they had sent Conrad, a turgid epistle intimating that the S.P.Q.R. would be proud to invest him with the title of Emperor, he answered that his forefathers had won that title by arms and 'let him who dares try to wrest the club from Hercules.' He was determined to slay the hydra of republican liberty. He then wrote to Pope Eugenius, who answered inflaming his wrath still more against these insolent senators and undertook to crown him if he came and subjected Rome, as he had promised, to the Empire and to the Holy Church. Nor did Frederick delay his coming long. As soon as he had established his authority firmly in his northern dominions—had bestowed the crowns of Denmark and Bohemia and had annexed Burgundy—he crossed the Alps and in November 1154 held a great diet of all his Italian feudatories, lay and cleric, on the plain of Roncaglia, not far from Piacenza. True to his policy, he took severe measures against the growing independence of the Lombard cities; and 'envy, the bane of republics,' stood him in good stead, for grievous jealousies and strife had already arisen between them, and some eagerly seized the opportunity of accusing their rivals. Milan especially was bitterly assailed by less flourishing and more imperialistic cities, such as its neighbour Pavia, and incurred Frederick's fiercest displeasure by refusing him his regalian rights (*e.g.* custom-dues, coinage, food for his soldiers, and so on) and inciting resistance when

he attempted to abolish the consuls and other republican magistrates and to impose German governors (*Podestà*) with dictatorial powers. He deemed it inadvisable to attack Milan itself, but vented his wrath by demolishing two of its allies—little Tortona, which stood a siege heroically for two months (and was soon rebuilt by the Milanese), and Asti, famous in a later age for its wine and for Alfieri.

Meantime Pope Eugenius and also his successor had died, and the Englishman Breakspear (Hadrian IV) had ascended the papal throne. His pride and impetuosity (which ere he died made him confess that the most miserable mortal on earth was a Pope) were soon in evidence. A cardinal had been attacked in the street—perhaps by anti-clerical republicans. Hadrian, who knew that Frederick would soon be there to aid him, forthwith does what no Pope had ever ventured to do—he lays the whole city under interdict. No religious functions are permitted save baptism and last sacrament. So terrified are the Romans that even the senators finally entreat pardon; and they gain it by the expulsion of Arnold of Brescia, who wanders as a fugitive from place to place, dreading the vengeance of the English pontiff, while Hadrian enthrones himself triumphantly in the Lateran. And now Frederick, 'smoking with the blood of the Lombard Communes,' appears before the gates of Rome. Arnold is betrayed and handed over by the Emperor to the Pope, and by the Pope to the Prefect, who has him hanged and burnt. The Senate, imagining that by this dastardly act the grace of the German monarch has been secured, sends to his camp a message of fulsome flattery and proposes once more to bestow on him the title of Emperor. But the envoys are disdainfully dismissed and Frederick marches his soldiery into the Leonine quarter and occupies St. Peter's basilica; and here Pope Hadrian, a few days after he has handed over Arnold to the gallows and the pyre, lays the imperial diadem on the head of his benefactor (June 1155).

But this unnatural alliance—this *puttaneggiar co' regi*—was bound to prove short-lived. A very serious fight had taken place, on and near the S. Angelo bridge, after the corona-

tion. About a thousand Roman citizens had been killed or drowned. Intense indignation prevailed, and Frederick found it advisable to escape from Rome and hurry northwards, leaving the Pope and his cardinals safely deposited in Tivoli. It was with difficulty that he forced his way through his disaffected Italian dominions, and when once more at home he began to revise his policy. He had already been angered by the papal claims to Tuscany (Matilda's territories), and by the fact that Hadrian, like several of his predecessors, had sought to strengthen himself by alliance with the Norman depredators and usurpers, and had even presumed to act as overlord of South Italy and Sicily and to invest Roger's son, William the Bad, with kingship. But worse was to follow. Ignoring the Concordat of Worms, Frederick had begun to appoint his own German bishops. Hadrian protested, and in his letter alluded to the late coronation as the bestowal by himself of the *beneficium* (fief) of the Empire, implying that Frederick was his feudatory. Hereupon took place a great outburst of indignation. The papal friendship was flung to the winds, and with a powerful army and a number of lay and clerical jurists Frederick again (July 1158) crossed the Alps, in order to chastise the insubordinate Communes [1] and to decide once for all his rights as Emperor in regard to Popes and republics. Milan was forced to surrender, and its citizens, together with their archbishop and their consuls, had to present themselves as barefoot and ash-strewn suppliants with cords round their necks, and when the ensigns on their *Carroccio* were lowered in obeisance the whole multitude sank on their knees and begged for mercy.

The conclusions arrived at by Frederick's lawyers assembled at Roncaglia were drawn mainly from antiquated Justinian definitions and gave the Emperor an authority incompatible with constitutional government. Moreover, very unjust distinctions were made, some cities receiving much liberty and

[1] The original champions of liberty were Milan, Brescia, Piacenza, Parma, and Modena. On the other side were Pavia, Como, Lodi, and Cremona (for a time). Genoa and Pisa were favoured by Frederick, who hoped to use their fleets.

others being enslaved. But the humiliation of Milan had cowed resistance. One brave little town, Crema, alone defied the German despot, and after a siege [1] of six months was taken and demolished.

The break with Frederick now induced the Papacy to form another unnatural alliance. Though in Rome it was a deadly foe to republican freedom, it was keen-witted enough to sue the friendship of the northern Communes and to support them against the common enemy. On Hadrian's decease in 1159 a Pope not less strong-willed and ambitious had been elected by the clerical party. But great tumults had ensued, and Alexander III was so successfully opposed by the Antipope Victor, elected by Roman imperialists, that he had to flee to France, and to console himself by futile excommunication of both the Antipope and the Emperor. Thus for the present the cause of the Communes was not aided by the papal alliance, and when Frederick in 1161, irritated by the reviving impudence of Milan, laid siege to that city no succour arrived. After a long and heroic resistance it was taken (1162), and, as was to be expected, it was almost totally destroyed and depopulated [2] —a fate that it had suffered more than once in days long past.

But freedom's banner streams like the thunder-storm against the wind. Driven to despair, the North Italian cities, led by the now powerful and independent Venice, began to combine, and when towards the end of 1163 Frederick for the third time made a descent upon Italy he found it advisable to beat a retreat. Three years later he returned with a larger army; but meanwhile the League,[3] newly constituted by Venice, Verona, Padua, and Vicenza, had extended itself through

[1] It is asserted that the Germans bound a number of captive children to a movable siege-tower; but the besieged repelled it, slaying their own children rather than surrender.

[2] Both in the siege and in the barbarous destruction of Milan several Lombard cities, among them Como, took a large and shameful part. Few of the churches were spared. S. Ambrogio was one of these.

[3] The League as constituted in December 1167 included sixteen large cities. In 1168 even Como joined. I refer here, once for all, to the very full account of the League and of the rise and nature of the North Italian Communes given by Sismondi in his huge *Histoire des républiques italiennes*. I touch slightly on these subjects in my chapter on the Communes.

32. Baptistery Portal, Volterra

Lombardy and was being joined even by cities, such as Cremona, that hitherto had been imperialistic. Moreover, at Rome the imperial cause was waning. Victor, Frederick's Antipope, had died, and although the imperial faction had forthwith elected another (Paschal), the fugitive Pope Alexander III had returned from France and had expelled the rival pontiff.

Frederick thought it best to strike first at Rome. He therefore left the northern cities unmolested, and having reduced Ancona (a strategical position necessary to cover his advance) he pushed southwards, and in the height of an exceedingly hot and pestilential summer (1167) he entered the Leonine quarter. But the Romans showed fight, and the Germans were unable to force their way across the Tiber into the city or even to capture S. Angelo. It was as much as they could do to occupy St. Peter's with troops while Antipope Paschal went through the ceremony of crowning Frederick's consort as Empress. And they had been hardly a fortnight in Rome when a virulent malarial epidemic, or perhaps the plague, broke out, and Frederick hastily led his army northwards. Many of his retinue, nobles and generals and prelates, fell victims to the pestilence, and about 2000 of his fighting men; nor did the mortality cease for some time after Germany was reached.[1]

Pavia was almost the only large Lombard town that had not joined the League. It proved a constant annoyance to Milan, which had been rebuilt and refortified in an incredibly short time by the enthusiasm of the allies.[2] In order to check Pavia also from the south the town of Alessandria was now built, and in a short time could furnish 15,000 fighters. Its name signalized the friendship of Pope Alexander, but it received from its enemies the contemptuous sobriquet of the 'city of straw'—in allusion to its supposed frailty or to its hastily

[1] Thomas à Becket wrote congratulating Pope Alexander on the 'fate of Sennacherib.'

[2] The great circular moat (the inner *Naviglio* of to-day), made in 1157 and destroyed in 1162, was now restored. This would take less time than building walls, and Milan, since the removal of the old Roman walls of the inner city, relied mainly on its moat.

erected straw-roofed houses. Frail it certainly proved itself not to be, for when, after a pause of six years, Frederick made his fifth descent on Italy and attempted to capture this city of straw he was compelled to withdraw his troops after five months of ineffectual siege, and shortly afterwards he was totally defeated by the allies at Legnano, some twelve miles north-east of Milan. So overwhelming was the catastrophe that Frederick himself disappeared in the general rout, and is said to have reached Pavia with great difficulty three days after the battle.

This disaster made Frederick realize the impotence of fury and inhumanity in a contest with those who were ready to die for liberty. His nature, too, was not so wholly cruel and ignoble that he could not feel some admiration for heroism. He agreed on the proposal of Doge Ziani to meet at Venice not only Pope Alexander and envoys from William the Good of Sicily, but even delegates from the allied cities. This was the first time that republican envoys had ever met a Pope or an Emperor on equal terms. It was therefore an event that promised great things Perhaps it was the most momentous crisis that ever occurred in Italian history. Alas that so fair a promise should have been frustrated by those intestine feuds which caused Italy to 'cast away the pearl of great price, and sacrifice even the recollection of that liberty which had stalked as a majestic spirit among the ruins of Milan.' [1]

The meeting of Frederick Barbarossa and Pope Alexander at Venice in the summer of 1177 has been described so often (sometimes without any reference to Legnano and the delegates of the Lombard republics!) that it may here be passed over lightly. In the *Atrio* of St. Mark's three porphyry slabs in the pavement are believed to commemorate the splendid and dramatic function; but it doubtless took place as described by an eye-witness,[2] outside or under the great portal. The results of the Venetian conference were the deposition of Calixtus (the third of Frederick's Antipopes), a peace of fifteen

[1] Hallam's *Middle Ages*, I, iii.

[2] The Archbishop of Salerno. The bronze horses over the portal were brought from Constantinople twenty-seven years later. Most of the present external mosaics are modern productions of no artistic value.

years with William of Sicily, and a truce of six years with the Lombard republics. Moreover an agreement, of no very satisfactory and permanent nature, was patched up in regard to the vexed question of the Matilda Legacy. Pope Alexander re-entered Rome in triumph, greeted by the homage and enthusiasm of all parties.[1] Frederick returned to Germany and for the next seven years enjoyed peace and the loyal reverence of his northern subjects, while by a generous compact with the Lombard cities, which he signed at Constanz in 1183 and by which he granted them many privileges, he so won their affection that Alessandria even offered to change its name to Caesarea! Striking evidence of his prosperity too is afforded by the descriptions that chroniclers have given of a magnificent festivity held in 1184 at Mainz—a veritable Field of Cloth of Gold. His last visit to Italy was of a character very different from his former expeditions. Without an army he journeyed from city to city, welcomed and honoured everywhere. For Milan he showed special affection, and he undertook to rebuild heroic little Crema. *Adsit omen!*

In 1186 there was celebrated at Milan a very momentous wedding. William II, the King of Sicily, was childless, so he agreed that his elderly aunt and heiress Constance (Costanza), daughter of the late King Roger, should marry Frederick's son Henry, a young man of twenty-one. Thus the long enmity of the Normans and Germans was ended, and the Hohenstaufen monarchs added Sicily and South Italy to their Empire.

In 1187 Jerusalem was recaptured by the Turks, and in 1189 Frederick, now sixty-eight years of age, joined Richard of England [2] and Philippe Auguste of France in the third Crusade. Before reaching the Holy Land he was drowned in attempting to swim across the river Salef, not far from the Cydnus, in which Alexander the Great nearly lost his life. For

[1] But at his death in 1181 the old feuds broke out again, and the next three Popes passed most of their time in exile.

[2] It is interesting to note that on his outward voyage Richard touched at Ostia, but refused to visit the papal court because it was 'full of greed and corruption.'

centuries the belief prevailed in Germany that the great Kaiser had never really died, but that he was sleeping beneath his castle on the Kyffhäuser mount and would some day awake and restore the Empire—a tradition that Rückert has versified in a fine ballad. The character of Frederick, as displayed in what we know of his life, is difficult for us to appraise, and perhaps the verdict of Dante, which was probably the verdict of his age, only increases our difficulty; for, though in his *Inferno* he assigns the second Frederick the fiery sepulchre of a heretic, he speaks of *il buon Barbarossa.* But this expression, it should be added, some commentators regard as ironical.

As a framework, reigns and dynasties are often useful, and the history of medieval Italy has so little inner consistency that it needs the framework afforded by the reigns and dynasties of its invaders and its alien, especially its German, masters. But in some cases the periods into which German history falls do not correspond with those which are convenient in the case of Italy. The Hohenstaufen dynasty continued to rule in Italy for more than half a century, but such events as the recognition of the republics by the treaty of Constanz and the merging of the Norman kingship in that of the German monarchs by the marriage of Constance with Henry VI initiate a new period in Italian history and render it advisable to make a break here, at the death of Barbarossa in 1190.

EMPERORS, KINGS, AND POPES

800–962

EMPERORS AND KINGS	POPES	ACCESSION
1. Carolingian Emperors 800–88		
Charles the Great, *Emp.* 800–14	**Leo III,** 795–816	
[*Pipin, son of Charles, King of Italy* 781–810]		
Louis I, the Pious, or le Débonnaire, *Emp.* 814–40	Stephen IV	816
[*Crowned Emp. already in* 813. *Bernard, son of Pipin, King of Italy* 810–18]	Paschal I	817
	Eugenius II	824
	Valentinus	827
Lothair I, *Emp.* 840–55	**Gregory IV**	827
[*Crowned already in* 817. *Retired to monastery*]	Sergius II	844
	Leo IV	847
Louis II, le Jeune, *Emp.* 855–75	[*Pope Joan!* See p. 392]	
[*Crowned Emp. already in* 850]	Benedict III	855
	Nicholas I	858
	Hadrian II	867
	John VIII	872
Charles II, the Bald *King of France* 843 *Emp.* 875–77		
[*Carlmann, King of Italy* 877–79]		
Charles III, the Fat *King of Italy* 879 *Emp.* 881, *dep.* 887, *d.* 888	Marinus (Martin II ?)	882
	Hadrian III	884
[*Succeeds as French and German king in* 884, *thus reuniting the realms of Charles the Great*]	Stephen V	885
2. So-called period of independent Italian kings—really a turbulent medley of rival dukes and 'kings' of various nationality, the first five of whom succeed in attaining papal coronation as 'Emperors' (888–961)		
Guido of Spoleto *King of Italy* 889 *Emp.* 891–94	[*Stephen V crowns Guido Emperor in* 891 *and dies in same year*]	
Lambert (his son) *Emp.* 894–98	**Formosus**	891
[*Crowned already* 892]	[*Crowns Lambert Emperor at Ravenna in* 892, *and Arnulf in Rome in* 896]	

EMPERORS AND KINGS	POPES	ACCESSION
Arnulf of Carinthia [*a bastard Carolingian*] *German king* 887 *Emp.* 896–99	Boniface VI [*Reigned only fifteen days*]	896
Louis III [*son of Boson, King of Provence, and of a daughter of Louis II*] *Emp.* 901 *Dep. and blinded* 904, *d.* 928	Stephen VI [*Cites the corpse of Formosus before a Synod. Is deposed and strangled*]	896
Berengar of Friuli [*son of Gisela, the daughter of Louis the Pious; since* 888 *claimant to crown of Italy against Guido, Lambert, Arnulf, and Louis*] *King of Italy* 888 (*or* 899) *Emp.* 915 *Assassinated at Verona* 924	Romanus (*four months*)	897
	Theodorus II (*twenty days*)	897
	John IX [*Crowns Louis III*]	898
	Benedict IV	900
	Leo V [*Deposed and probably murdered by*]	903
	Christopher [*Deposed and probably murdered by*]	903
	Sergius III [*Lover of Marozia. Elected already in* 898, *but expelled by the party of John IX*]	904
	Anastasius III	911
	Lando	913
	John X [*Lover of Theodora; crowns Berengar Emperor; then invites and crowns Rudolf King of Italy; then Hugo of Provence; finally murdered by order of Marozia*]	914
[For thirty-seven years, 925–62, no Emperor, but the following kings]		
Rudolf of Burgundy King of Italy 925–26 [*Crowned during life of Berengar,* 922]	Leo VI [*Nominated by Marozia*]	928
Hugo of Provence King of Italy 926–46	Stephen VII [*Nominated by Marozia*]	929
[Alberich governs Rome 932–54]	John XI [*Son of Marozia and Pope Sergius*]	931
Berengar of Ivrea Helped by Otto of Germany, drives out Hugo, and is made regent-guardian of Hugo's son	Leo VII	936
	Stephen VIII	939
	Martin III (or Marinus II)	941

EMPERORS AND KINGS	POPES	ACCESSION
Lothair King of Italy 946 Poisoned by Berengar (?) 950	Agapetus II	946
Berengar II Together with his son **Adalbert**, King of Italy 950–61 (64 ?)		
Otto of Saxony, *m.* Adelheid, widow of Lothair, and takes title of King of Italy 951	John XII [*Son of Alberich; made Pope when sixteen years old; crowns Otto Emperor. Next year*, 963, *is deposed by him and his Council, and in* 964 *is killed by an outraged husband*]	955
Berengar II does homage to Otto for the Italian crown, but revolts and is conquered and sent to Germany (964), *where he dies. Meanwhile* (962) *Otto has himself crowned as Emperor.* (*The 'Holy Roman Empire' may be supposed to have now begun; and it should be noted that by the assumption of the title 'King of the Romans' a German king was commonly regarded as Emperor, although he was really only Emperor-designate until he had been crowned in St. Peter's. Dante, for instance, calls Conrad III and also Rudolf of Habsburg 'imperador,' though they never received the imperial diadem. See also note under Otto III in next List.*)		

EMPERORS (SAXON AND FRANCONIAN) AND POPES

962–1125

SAXON EMPERORS (962–1024)	POPES	ACCESSION
Otto I (the Great) King of Germany 936 King of Italy 951 Emperor 962–73	Leo VIII (*Elected by Otto*)	963
From 911 to 918 Conrad I, Duke of Franconia, had been German king. Him followed his rival, Henry I of Saxony, 919–36, who was the founder of the *German* Empire. Otto was his son and was elected king at Aachen by the representatives of the whole German people—the precursors of the Seven Kurfürsten (Electors).	Benedict V (*Elected by Romans; carried off by Otto to Hamburg, where he dies*)	964
	John XIII (*Protégé of Otto*)	965
	Benedict VI (*Imprisoned by Romans and strangled*)	972
Otto II, son of Otto I King and Emperor 973–83 (*crowned already in* 967)	Boniface VII (*Flees to Constantinople* 974, *but returns* 985)	973
	Benedict VII (*Flees, but restored by Otto II*)	974

SAXON AND FRANCONIAN EMPERORS (962–1024)	POPES	ACCESSION
Otto III, son of Otto II Crowned King of the Romans 983 (*three years old*) Theophano Empress-regent till 991 Adelheid regent 991–96 Otto Emperor 996–1002 [*According to Machiavelli*, Ist. Fior., I, xlii, *Gregory V, on his restoration by Otto, deprived the Romans of the right of 'creating the Emperor' and gave it to six Electors, viz. the Bishops of Mainz, Trier, and Cöln, and the Dukes of Saxony, Brandenburg, and the Palatinate. One may well ask whence the Pope, especially a German Pope, acquired the power to do this; but henceforth the title 'Emperor' or 'Kaiser'—and not only 'King of the Romans'—is assumed by German monarchs even before their coronation at Rome. Later the Electors, or Kurfürsten, were seven, as instituted by the 'Golden Bull' issued by Charles IV in* 1356]	John XIV (*Deposed and probably poisoned by Boniface VII, returned from Constantinople, who is killed shortly afterwards*)	983
	John XV (*Flees from Crescentius; restored by Otto, but dies soon after*)	985
	Gregory V (*Bruno, Otto's cousin. Flees from Crescentius; restored by Otto; probably poisoned* 999)	996
	John XVI (*Antipope elected by Crescentius; horribly mutilated by Otto's soldiers and dies in prison*)	997
Henry II (*of Saxony, Duke of Bavaria*) King of Germany 1002 King of Italy 1004 Emperor 1014–24	**Silvester II** (*Gerbert of France; Otto's tutor and Archbishop of Reims and Ravenna*)	999
	John XVII	1003
	John XVIII	1003
	Sergius IV (*Gregory, elected by Crescentians, deposed*)	1009
	Benedict VIII (*Count of Tusculum; crowns Henry II Emperor*)	1012
	John XIX (*Brother of Benedict VIII; a military official; 'uno eodemque die laicus et pontifex'; crowns Conrad II and Gisela*)	1024
Franconian Emperors (1024–1125) **Conrad II** Crowned German king at Aachen 1024 King of Italy at Milan 1026 Emperor at Rome 1027 *d.* 1039		
	Benedict IX (*A Count of Tusculum, elected at the age of twelve; proved a greater profligate and criminal than even John XII; expelled in* 1037, *but restored by Conrad. Expelled again in* 1044)	1033
	Silvester III (*Elected by Crescentian party; after forty-nine days expelled by Benedict IX, who, after about two months, sells the Papacy for an annuity to*)	1044
Henry III King of Germany 1039 Emperor 1046–56	Gregory VI (*These three rival Popes deposed by Henry III, who causes to be elected the German Bishop of Bamberg*)	1045
	Clement II (*Crowns Henry Emperor. Probably poisoned by Benedict IX, who has taken refuge at Tusculum, and now returns and seats himself again on the papal throne*)	1046

EMPERORS (SAXON AND FRANCONIAN) AND POPES (962-1125)

(continued)

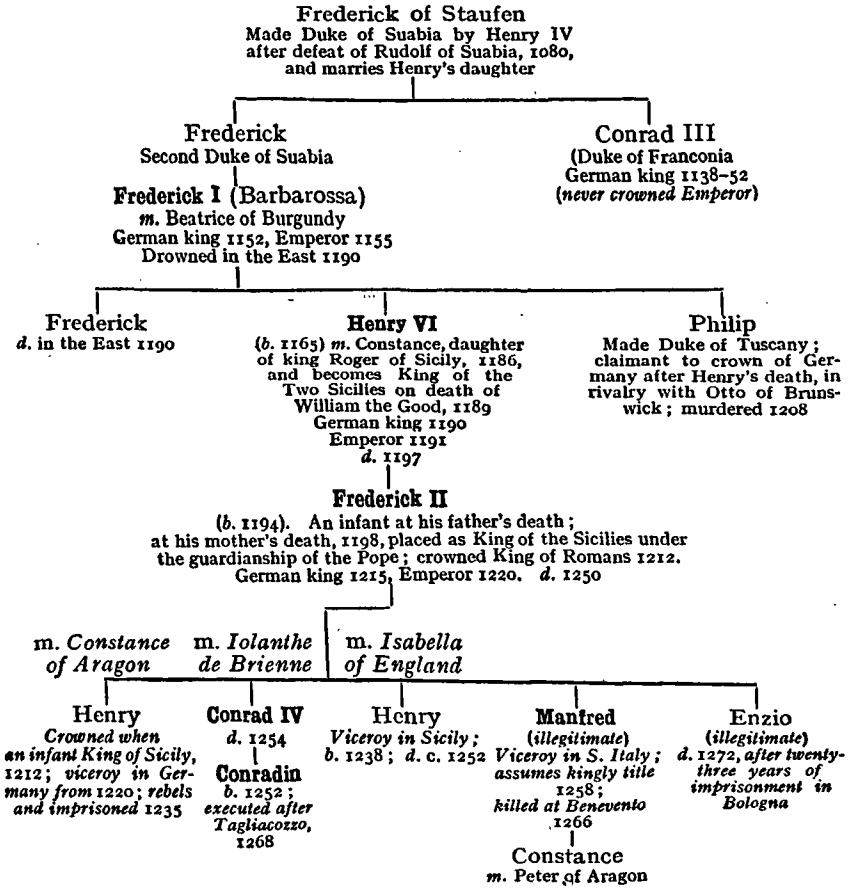
FRANCONIAN EMPERORS (1024-1125)	POPES	ACCESSION
	Damasus II *(German Bishop of Brixen made Pope by Henry III. Benedict flees to Tusculum. His end unknown. Damasus dies suddenly, probably poisoned, twenty-three days after election)*	1048
	Leo IX *(German. Nominated by Henry III)*	1048
	Victor II *(German. Nominated by Henry III)*	1054
Henry IV German king 1056 *(first under regency of his mother Agnes)*	Stephen IX *(Probably poisoned)*	1057
	Benedict X *(Tool of Roman nobles; deposed by Hildebrand and his party)*	1058
	Nicholas II *(Tool of Hildebrand's)*	1059
	Alexander II *(Anselm of Lucca, another nominee of Hildebrand and Matilda)*	1061
	Gregory VII (Hildebrand) *(Dies in exile at Salerno, 1085)*	1073
King of Italy 1080 Emperor 1084-1106 *(crowned by Antipope Clement III)*	Clement *(Antipope set up by Henry IV, whom he crowns Emperor)*	1080
	Victor III *(Abbot of Monte Cassino, elected by cardinals; Clement flees to Germany, but is restored by Henry; Victor retires to Monte Cassino and dies)*	1086
	Urban II *(Friend of Hildebrand, elected by cardinals; on return of Clement obliged to flee, but finally restored; preaches the First Crusade. Clement d. 1100)*	1087
Henry V German king 1106 Emperor 1111 *(crowned a second time 1117* *d. 1125*	Paschal II *(Is forced to crown Henry V)*	1099
	Gelasius II *(At once imprisoned by nobles, but released by the people; finally has to yield to Antipope Gregory and dies at Cluny)*	1118
	Gregory *(Antipope, nominated by Henry V; flies to Sutri and is there tortured and killed)*	1118
	Calixtus II *(Elected by cardinals; excommunicates Henry V and his Antipope; brings about the Concordat of Worms)*	1119
	Honorius II	1124

EMPERORS AND POPES TO THE DEATH OF BARBAROSSA

1125–1190

EMPERORS	POPES	ACCESSION
Lothar II (of Saxony) German king 1125–37 Emperor 1133–37		
HOHENSTAUFEN EMPERORS		
Conrad III Crowned at Monza King of Italy 1130 German king 1138–52 (*never crowned Emperor*)	**Innocent II**	1130 to 1143
	Anacletus (Antipope) *Disciple of Abelard; recognizes Roger as King of Sicily*	1130
	Victor (Antipope) [*Innocent proclaimed sole Pope by Lateran Council 1139*]	1138
	Celestin II	1143
	Lucius II (*Killed in a riot*)	1144
	[Republic at Rome. Arnold of Brescia and followers dominate the Popes]	
	Eugenius III (*Flees to France; preaches Second Crusade; restored by Conrad*)	1145
Frederick I (Barbarossa) German king 1152 Crowned with iron crown at Monza 1153 (April) Crowned Emperor at Rome 1155 (June)	Anastasius IV	1153
	Hadrian IV (*English; Breakspear; puts to death Arnold of Brescia; crowns Frederick*)	1154
	Alexander III (*Fugitive in France 1162–65*)	1159 to 1181
	Imperial Antipopes: Victor	1159
	Imperial Antipopes: Paschal (*Crowns Beatrice as Empress*)	1164
	Imperial Antipopes: Calixtus (*Frederick gives up Calixtus and recognizes Alexander as sole Pope 1177*)	1168
	Lucius III (*Flees to Frederick at Verona*)	1181
Drowned in the Salef 1190	Urban III	1185
	Gregory VIII	1187
	Clement III	1187

THE HOHENSTAUFER


Frederick of Staufen
Made Duke of Suabia by Henry IV after defeat of Rudolf of Suabia, 1080, and marries Henry's daughter
Frederick
Second Duke of Suabia
Conrad III
(Duke of Franconia
German king 1138–52
(never crowned Emperor)
Frederick I (Barbarossa)
m. Beatrice of Burgundy
German king 1152, Emperor 1155
Drowned in the East 1190
Frederick
d. in the East 1190
Henry VI
(b. 1165) m. Constance, daughter of king Roger of Sicily, 1186, and becomes King of the Two Sicilies on death of William the Good, 1189
German king 1190
Emperor 1191
d. 1197
Philip
Made Duke of Tuscany; claimant to crown of Germany after Henry's death, in rivalry with Otto of Brunswick; murdered 1208
Frederick II
(b. 1194). An infant at his father's death; at his mother's death, 1198, placed as King of the Sicilies under the guardianship of the Pope; crowned King of Romans 1212. German king 1215, Emperor 1220. d. 1250
m. Constance of Aragon
m. Iolanthe de Brienne
m. Isabella of England
Henry
Crowned when an infant King of Sicily, 1212; viceroy in Germany from 1220; rebels and imprisoned 1235
Conrad IV
d. 1254
Conradin
b. 1252; executed after Tagliacozzo, 1268
Henry
Viceroy in Sicily; b. 1238; d. c. 1252
Manfred
(illegitimate)
Viceroy in S. Italy; assumes kingly title 1258; killed at Benevento 1266
Constance
m. Peter of Aragon
Enzio
(illegitimate)
d. 1272, after twenty-three years of imprisonment in Bologna

CHAPTER I

THE DARK AGE

WHEN we speak of the Dark Age, or the Dark Ages, of European history we generally use the expression rather vaguely to denote the not easily determinable midnight watch of the Middle Ages—the limits of which are themselves somewhat difficult to determine. It is not easy, perhaps not possible, to discover any one century, or period, when the darkness brooded with equal obscurity over the whole of Western Europe; and we cannot fail to observe that in various countries the quality of the darkness was very different; for although ignorance, superstition, vice, and ferocity usually go hand in hand, there have been cases where moral and religious enlightenment has prevailed amidst gross ignorance of arts and letters, and also cases where the most hideous vice, inhumanity, and irreligion have existed in a Golden Age of learning and aesthetic refinement—covered up, so to speak, with Raffaelesque tapestries. Indeed, we should not be misusing words very seriously if we called the age of the Borgias, which was also the age of the High Renaissance, the darkest period of the Roman Church—perhaps even darker than the pontificate of John the Twelfth itself.

But as regards Italy—or perhaps we should say Rome—we may, I think, consider the ninth and tenth centuries and half the eleventh (say 830–1050) as the darkest of its Dark Ages. In earlier times there had been long periods when the whole country, ravaged by sword, fire, famine, and pestilence, was in a state of indescribable misery, but the ulcerous horror of internal corruption during what we may call the darkest age of the history of Christian Rome was far more terrible than all that was suffered from barbarian or Byzantine foes.

Any fairly full account of this Dark Age of Italian history would occupy more pages than this volume contains. I must therefore be content to make some general remarks and to give a few pictures illustrative of the manners and customs of those days. Sometimes the brief description of a single scene impresses on one's mind the character of an age more permanently than is done by many words.

We may consider the original living stock of classical art and literature to have died down gradually during the three centuries that followed the age of the Antonines, and, except for such literary survivals as Boëthius, Cassiodorus, and Amalasuntha, and except a few *scholae* that may have kept up traditions of classical art, it can scarcely be said to have existed as a national influence in the days of Theoderic and during the Lombard domination.

It is true that a certain kind of culture, founded on classical writings but used almost wholly for purposes theological and devotional, was fostered in monasteries. This culture spread, even before the time of Benedict and Monte Cassino, to the wilds of Gaul and Britain, so that by the age of Gregory the Great and Theodelinda there was probably more erudition of this kind in Tours, Bangor-Iscoed and Caerleon, or in Ireland and the Irish St. Gallen, than in Rome; and nigh a century ere the day of Charles the Great, at an epoch when the darkness was beginning to gather ever denser over the mother-city of Western Christianity the homeland of Bede could claim to be an important centre of European learning, and St. Boniface of England had won the title of the Apostle of Germany.

Charles the Great was a patron of learning—such learning as had been preserved by the monks—a learning, be it noticed, that was inspired with but little enthusiasm for what is great in ancient literature and art,[1] but which at least kept alive the elements of literary civilization. At his court we find

[1] The ancient manuscripts destroyed by the monks for the purpose of using the parchment for theological or devotional writings were probably more numerous by far than all those destroyed by barbarian invaders or by the Turks.

a number of learned men, such as his biographer Einhart (Eginard) and Paul the Deacon, and the Englishman Alcwin, the monarch's favourite counsellor, by whose advice schools were founded in many quarters. It is also said, though not easily proved, that Charles built many churches and patronized art. Anyhow, we know that his rather unscrupulous love for things of beauty caused him to rob Ravenna of many of its splendid marbles in order to decorate his palace and cathedral at Aix-la-Chapelle. During the Carolingian [1] period Rome, and with it most of Italy except those cities which were under Byzantine supremacy or had connexions with the East, such as Venice, or which, such as Palermo and Messina, came under Saracen civilization, sank ever deeper into darkness, and during the social and political degradation caused by the *regno d'Italia indipendente* and the rule of Marozia and Alberich and John XII at Rome the gloom was perhaps deepest. There are those who endeavour to show that we are misled by the lack during these centuries of really able authors, and that we should not draw inferences as to the general state of things from the miserable literary productions that have survived.[2] We are told that 'in no age perhaps did Germany possess more learned and virtuous bishops than towards the end of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh centuries' (Meiners, quoted by Hallam). That may be perfectly true. As I have already remarked, the Darkest Age did not extend over all Western and Central Europe at the same time. In the tenth century there were centres of learning such as Reims and Cluny. Germany, too, was at this epoch probably blessed with a great deal more light than Rome, and these learned and virtuous bishops were doubtless the wise selections of German kings and not papal satellites. But

[1] In their northern dominions the Carolingians favoured learning, and Lothair is said to have founded schools in many towns of North Italy.

[2] Paul the Deacon (725–799), who was long at the court of Charles the Great and spent his last twelve years at Monte Cassino, wrote a very able *History of the Lombards*, and he speaks of 'illustrious and admirable poets' at Monte Cassino; but to judge from what remains of them they wrote only very bad doggerel in dog-Latin. During two centuries and more the only writer worth mentioning, besides monastic chroniclers, is Liudprand (see Index).

how about Italy in these centuries? And how about Rome itself?

Of the social and intellectual state of the rest of Italy during the period which we may call the Darkest Age (about 830 to 1050) we know little, but it is evident that, in spite of the incessant civil wars that raged until the coming of Otto the Great, in some of the northern cities, which were already acquiring a good deal of self-respect and independence, morals and education were on a considerably higher level than they were in what professed to be the mother-city of the religion of Western Europe. Artistic feeling and skill, anyhow, stood decidedly higher in the northern towns, as can be seen by comparing the first signs of that splendid Romanesque architecture which was soon to unfold all its beauty in those regions [1] with the utter deadness of all original art in Rome during the whole of this age. While Pisa was planning and beginning the building of its Duomo and Venice was rebuilding St. Mark's and adorning it with wondrous mosaics, in Rome nothing was attempted but reconstructions, for which ancient monuments were mercilessly pillaged; and the art of mosaics was extinct.[2]

Under the domination of the Saxon and Franconian Emperors, say during the eleventh century, began the first glimmering of the new day that was to dawn on Italy. We hear of the fame of the Italian universities of Bologna and of Salerno. (The latter, however, probably won from the Saracens its skill in medicine and mathematics.) We hear of learned Italians in distant lands—such as Lanfranc and Anselm, both priors of the celebrated Abbey of Bec and both Archbishops of Canterbury, the one a native of Pavia, the other of Aosta.

[1] In the south the Normans introduced about the same time an architecture scarcely less splendid—whence, it is difficult to say, as we shall see later.

[2] A grotesque mosaic near the tomb of Otto II (*d.* 983) in the crypt of St. Peter's is one of the earliest specimens of a faint revival of the art after a blank of about 150 years. In 896 the Lateran church, destroyed by earthquake, was rebuilt, but for the whole of this period little was attempted, and almost all perished when Robert Guiscard sacked Rome in 1084. The fine Roman *campanili* (with one or two exceptions) did not begin till about 1100.

Before long (about 1130–40) we hear of Abelard lecturing to immense audiences in Paris, and of his disciple, Arnold of Brescia, whose fiery enthusiasm lit for a season in Rome a beacon for the lovers of learning and of liberty—soon, alas, to be extinguished. And now the new spirit has already grown so strong in the Communes of Lombardy that they dare to stake their all in the hope of winning that political freedom under which, in spite of much that was tragic and deplorable, they fought their way valiantly and steadily onwards to the light.

It is sometimes asserted, as already remarked, that the state of learning in Italy, even in Rome, during the so-called Dark Age was not really so bad as has been made out.[1] It is affirmed that there were more schools in Italy than in any Northern country, and that in Rome there was very considerable erudition, especially among the laity—such laymen as the courtiers of Marozia or the Counts of Tusculum?—and that if the Popes and the clergy of Rome took but little interest in such matters it was because they were so much engrossed by matters of serious importance—such matters, I suppose, as the extension of the temporal power of the Church and the expulsion or poisoning of political enemies and Antipopes.

Even if we granted this affirmation and also allow the presence in Rome of learned Greeks, and of libraries, and of many ancient manuscripts that perished later, we should be compelled to add that the existence of schools and of erudition in the central city of Christendom made the immorality, the superstition, and the ferocity that prevailed there all the more shameful. And that such things did prevail there is not difficult to prove. As Gregorovius justly says, Popes, clergy, nobles, and people lived in a state of savagery scarce conceivable, and Rome stood deeply humiliated not only before the Christianity and the learning of Gaul and Britain and Germany and Byzantium, but also before the art and erudition of those Arab Moslems who indeed ravaged her Campagna and

[1] How far the general demoralization was due to the belief that the world would come to an end in A.D. 1000 is much disputed.

desecrated and plundered the sanctuaries of her saints, but who spread the light of science—of mathematics and medicine and astronomy and philosophy—from Bagdad to Alexandria and from Alexandria to Seville.[1] And though Rome herself may not have felt conscious of this humiliation, it was evident enough to the outside world. The contempt with which the Romans were regarded by the Byzantines is summed up in the scornful words of the Emperor Michael, who when writing to Pope Nicholas I (*c.* 860) calls their language [2] a language of barbarians and Scythians; and the disdainful invective with which (*c.* 900) the bishops of the Gallic Church, assembled at Reims, assailed the illiterate clergy of Rome and the Pope himself doubtless expresses the general feeling of Northern Christendom. Nor does it raise Rome and the Papacy in our estimation when we hear that this invective was answered by the papal legate with the assertion that from the beginning God had chosen the simple and unlearned to confound the wisdom of the world and that the Vicars of St. Peter and their disciples 'needed not to be fattened at the trough of Plato or Virgil or Terence or any other such philosophic swine.' But a few sketches of what actually occurred at Rome in this Dark Age will help us to realize the condition in which religion and morality and humanity found themselves.

The Relic-mania and Body-snatching

In a former chapter I described the mania that developed itself in early days for acquiring the corpses, or the bones, of saints and martyrs, and the superstitions connected with wonder-working bones and *brandea*; and on various occasions mention has been made of the supposed discovery and the strange fortunes of some celebrated relics (such as those of St. Mark, St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Bartholomew, and St. Augustine)

[1] Avicenna lived from 980 to 1037; Averroës, *che 'l gran comento feo*, from *c.* 1126 to 1198.

[2] The *lingua vulgaris* was already corrupting classical Latin very rapidly. See Part V, ch. iv. But Emperor Michael perhaps meant that Latin itself was a barbarian jargon, for the Pope in answer ridiculed the idea of a so-called 'Roman' Emperor being ignorant of Latin.

and of the pride that was felt by cities and by founders of churches when they could purchase a sacred corpse, or, in case that proved impossible (a whole genuine corpse being an exceedingly expensive article), when they were able to procure even the half or the quarter of some dead body which they had been especially eager to possess.

As the number of churches increased throughout Christendom the demand for bodies and bones became ever greater, and the institution of pilgrimages [1] caused an enormous increase in the supply, for every *roméo* (pilgrim to Rome) was anxious to acquire relics, as the modern tourist is generally anxious to acquire curiosities; and relics, like modern antiquities, had to be forthcoming. Catacombs and graves were plundered by night, and the tombs in churches had to be watched by armed men. Rome, says Gregorovius, was like a mouldering cemetery in which hyenas howled and fought as they dug greedily after corpses. And these corpses and skeletons were labelled with the names of popular saints and sold piecemeal to pilgrims. Or courageous foreigners would sometimes succeed in stealing precious relics from a church.[2] Thus in 827 Frankish pilgrims carried off to Soissons the bones of SS. Peter and Marcellinus, and a presbyter of Reims in 849 had the audacity and luck to steal what was supposed to be the body of St. Helena, Constantine's mother. Sometimes too a Pope would, as a very special favour, present some foreign church or potentate with a valuable corpse. 'These dead bodies,' says Gregorovius, 'were transported on richly decorated vehicles and escorted for some distance by the Roman populace in solemn procession with lighted torches and pious psalmody; and from every town, at the approach of the car, streamed forth the citizens, imploring and expecting

[1] These pilgrimages, with their throngs of malefactors and unprotected, often weak-minded, females, were the source of very great evil. It is said that cities were largely supplied with fallen women by means of pilgrimages, and so many of these were Englishwomen that, as Milman says, it became a 'scandal for the Anglican Church.'

[2] A marble slab in S. Prassede (Rome) states that the bodies of 2300 martyrs were transferred from the cemeteries to this church by Pope Paschal in 817.

miracles of healing. When it arrived at its destination—a city or a monastery of Germany, France, or England—the sacred body was welcomed with hymns of triumph and festivities that lasted many days.' Wars were even waged for the possession of some coveted relic. For instance, Dukes of Benevento after reducing Naples and Amalfi to submission extorted from their consternated victims, as the price of peace, the mummies of St. Januarius and St. Triphomena. It was one of these dukes, Sicard by name, who was lucky enough to secure the corpse of St. Bartholomew, the wondrous journeys of which have already been related (p. 343 *n.*). This prince, says Gregorovius, 'sent his agents out to search all the coasts and islands of Italy for bones and skulls and other relics, and transformed the cathedral of Benevento into a charnel-house.'

This horrid craving for corpses and bones has never been quite cured in Christendom, and that it was still intense towards the end of what I have called the Dark Age may be inferred from the fact—for such it is said to be—that when St. Romuald, the founder of the Camaldolenses, was intending to leave Italy assassins were sent after him in order, if possible, to secure at least his dead body rather than let him be lost entirely to his native country. Unluckily, he escaped.[1]

'Pope Joan'

The curious story of 'Pope Joan' (*la Papessa Giovanna*) lies outside the realm of certified fact, but does not lie outside the realm of history, for history should not reject possibilities nor ignore beliefs that have influenced the course of events; and this story, although it may have first originated in the thirteenth century and was perhaps invented by some of the many fierce enemies of the Papacy and in particular of Pope Boniface VIII, was for many centuries, we are told by Gregorovius, believed by chroniclers and by bishops—nay, by Popes them-

[1] Even if not true, the story shows what was believed to be possible. It is asserted that he lived to the age of 120 and that nearly four hundred years after his death (*i.e.* in 1446) his body was found still undecayed; but it was stolen, and forthwith crumbled into dust!

selves and by everybody else. How unquestioning this belief was is proved by the fact that for two centuries (1400–1600) the bust of 'Johannes VIII, femina ex Anglia,' stood among the busts of the Popes in Siena Cathedral.[1]

According to the tale 'Pope Joan' was the daughter of an Anglo-Saxon; but she was born in the Rhineland, at Ingelheim, where Charles the Great had a castle, between Mainz and Bingen. She won great distinction at Mainz for her learning, and, disguised as a man, entered the celebrated monastery of Fulda (between Frankfurt and Bebra) that had been founded some eighty years previously by the English Apostle of Germany, St. Boniface, Archbishop of Mainz. Later, it is said, she studied in England and also at Athens, and then received the post of a teacher in the *Schola Graecorum* at Rome, an ancient training college for deacons, where she gained so much influence that on the death of Leo IV she was made Pope (about 855 apparently). After a pontificate which is calculated to a nicety by chroniclers as having lasted two years, one month, and four days, her sex was discovered—so runs the tale—by her giving birth to an infant and dying while taking part in a procession. The horrified ecclesiastics buried her where she had expired, between the Colosseum and S. Clemente, and on this spot (which was ever afterwards avoided by Popes) her statue was erected, with her child in her arms and the papal mitre on her head.[2] How such a well-connected narrative could have been fabricated it is not easy to divine, but although some of the story of her adventurous life may be true, the assertion that she was elected Pope seems to be conclusively disproved by a coin of Pope Benedict III which is stamped with the name of the Emperor Lothair. Now it is pretty certain that Leo IV died on July 17, 855, and Lothair died, in a Benedictine monastery, on September 28 of the same year; so it seems as if Benedict must have succeeded Leo; and this is stated by the *Liber Pontificalis*,

[1] It was transformed by Clement VIII into a portrait of Pope Zacharias.

[2] For writers on the subject see Gregorovius, Book V, ch. iii. It is alleged that until the end of the fifteenth century the Pope-designate had to undergo examination so as to avoid the possibility of another Papessa!

which tells us that his consecration took place on the day after Leo's death.

A Corpse summoned before a Synod [1]

It may be remembered that during the turbulent period which the Italians call *il regno d'Italia indipendente* a Duke of Spoleto named Guido succeeded in persuading, or forcing, Pope Stephen V to crown him in St. Peter's as Emperor, and the next year (892) brought similar pressure to bear on Stephen's successor, Pope Formosus, who at Ravenna (so at least chroniclers say whom Villari follows) crowned Guido's son, Lambert, as the coadjutor of his father on the imperial throne. This Pope Formosus was evidently a weak and untrustworthy individual, for even while he was crowning the young Lambert at Ravenna he was, one may feel sure, thinking—as Stephen had thought—how much rather he would see the imperial diadem on the head of the German Arnulf; and soon after the Ravenna coronation he began to correspond with the Carinthian duke and to incite him to come and try his luck. After an unsuccessful attempt in 894, Arnulf forced his way at last to Rome and was forthwith crowned by Formosus, who ignored the fact that two other so-called Emperors existed, and that he himself had acknowledged one of them and with his own hands had crowned the other.

The coronation of the foreign usurper—the *unctio barbarica*, as it was disdainfully called—inflamed the fury of the patriotic anti-German party in Rome, and when Arnulf was suddenly struck down by paralysis and Lambert with his mother Agiltrud [2] had entered Rome in triumph this resentful woman induced the Pope, Stephen VI, who was nothing loth, to perpetrate an act which for ghoulish hideousness has perhaps never been equalled in the history of humanity. It was resolved that a solemn Synod should be called to judge Pope Formosus, and that he should be summoned to appear *in propria persona*. His corpse, which had lain for eight months

[1] See pp. 325, 330, and list, p. 378.
[2] See p. 326.

in the crypt of St. Peter's, was dragged from its tomb and, clothed in pontifical robes, was set on a throne in the council-hall before the assembled priests and prelates of the Church of Christ. While all gazed shuddering at the ghastly thing, the sight and stench of which seemed to fill the whole assembly-hall with pestilential gloom, the advocate of Pope Stephen arose and addressed the corpse, near which stood the trembling deacon who had to act as counsel for the dead man. When the accusations [1] had been read Pope Stephen himself challenged the corpse to answer the charges. What the dead Pope's counsel, the trembling deacon, dared to say we do not know, but sentence of deposition was passed, all the acts and ordinances of Formosus were annulled, the three fingers of the right hand with which papal blessing had been dispensed were hacked off, the pontifical robes were torn from the poor dead body, and it was dragged by the feet through the council-hall and through the streets and finally, amid the howls and laughter of the mob, was cast into the Tiber.[2]

Stephen did not long enjoy his triumph. Chance, says Gregorovius, which sometimes undertakes the duties of Providence and does signs and wonders when saints are powerless, determined that soon after the Synod of Horror, while the corpse of Formosus was still weltering in the waves of Tiber, the ancient basilica of the Lateran, shaken by an earthquake, should suddenly collapse. At the crash of the falling temple Pope Stephen, who lived close by in the *Patriarchium*, was doubtless startled amidst his gloomy thoughts of the past, and to him the thunder of the downfall of the ancient church of Roman Christianity must have seemed a foreboding of the fate of the Papacy and of the doom that he himself was soon to encounter. In the same year the Roman mob rose against Emperor Lambert and his papal ally. Stephen was captured, despoiled of his pontifical robes, clothed in a monkish cowl,

[1] The real motive of the act was, of course, political and personal, but ecclesiastical charges had to be invented. The chief of these was the infringement by Formosus (who had been Bishop of Porto) of an old and practically obsolete rule that no bishop should be translated to the papal dignity.

[2] Accounts vary a little. I have drawn from Gregorovius.

and sent to a monastery, where not long afterwards he was strangled.[1] One of his successors, Theodorus, though he reigned only twenty days, gave honourable burial to the poor insulted body of Formosus, which had been found by Roman fishers, and Liudprand assures us that he 'often heard it said by the most religious men in Rome' that when the corpse was carried into St. Peter's 'certain images of saints saluted it with reverence'—perhaps the figures of saints in paintings or mosaics with which Formosus himself had decorated the church, or the crypt.

However repulsive the scene may be, the descriptions that chroniclers give of Pope Stephen's Synod help one to form a just conception of the state of religion, morals, and humanity at Rome in the ninth century. And we must remember that this was nothing exceptional—nothing that excited general denunciation or protest. Occurrences no less horrifying were constantly taking place. During the eight years that followed this horrible Synod seven Popes died, several probably by poison or strangulation, and the brief notes given in the List of Popes (p. 378 *sq.*) intimate the fate of many others. The scene about to be described is only a specimen of the indescribable ferocity of the age, and one of thousands of proofs of the truth of such assertions as that of Gregorovius, to which I have already alluded, that 'the Popes, the clergy, the nobles and people of Rome in this age lived in a state of barbarism than which nothing more horrible can be conceived.'

The Fate of Antipope John XVI[2]

In the year 996 Otto III, being then only sixteen years old, caused to be elected as Pope the chaplain Bruno, his second-cousin, twenty-three years of age, son of the Marquess

[1] The 'monster' Pope Sergius III, who was of the faction of Stephen VI and had been chosen Pope in 897 by this party, but had been expelled by the faction of Formosus, when he ascended the papal throne later (904) gave Stephen a tomb in St. Peter's and furnished it with an epitaph describing his death by strangulation and abusing Formosus. (Professor Villari, in writing to me, courteously allows that he was wrong in asserting that it was the tomb of Formosus on which the abusive epitaph was placed.)

[2] See pp. 343, 380.

of Verona. Bruno, who was the first German Pope, took the name Gregory V. About three weeks after his consecration he set the imperial diadem on the head of his royal relative in St. Peter's basilica at Rome. But in September of the same year a revolution, headed by the powerful noble Crescentius, caused Pope Gregory to flee to Pavia, whence he launched a futile bolt of excommunication against the Roman rebel. Crescentius answered the challenge by causing an Antipope to be elected. His choice fell on Philagathus, the Bishop of Piacenza, a Greek of Calabria, formerly (as also Silvester II) the tutor of Otto. This prelate had lately returned from Constantinople, whither Otto, his former pupil, had sent him to negotiate for the hand of a Byzantine princess. Doubtless he had cherished hopes of election to the pontifical chair, and probably felt resentment when the young Otto nominated his cousin Bruno. However that may be, he accepted the offer made by Crescentius and was consecrated (May 997), taking the name John XVI. Otto then decided to restore his cousin. He crossed the Alps and spent the Christmas of that year (997) at Pavia. Early in the following spring he entered Rome. Crescentius withdrew into the well-provisioned and almost impregnable fortress of S. Angelo, while the Antipope fled from the city and took refuge in a tower somewhere in the Campagna, hoping to escape thence by land or by sea to Byzantine territory. For a description of what then occurred I shall take the liberty of borrowing and freely translating a passage from Villari.

'While hiding in this tower the Antipope was discovered and captured by some of the Emperor's soldiers, who gouged his eyes out, cut out his tongue, and sliced off his nose and his ears. Thus mutilated, he was brought before a Synod, excommunicated, and stripped of his episcopal robes. Then he was set facing backwards on a donkey and paraded through the streets of Rome, accompanied by a public herald, who proclaimed aloud his crimes and the punishments that he had been awarded. Then he was cast into a dungeon; and there he died. . . . Otto, after presiding at several councils and

having commanded the erection of various new churches and convents (a matter in which he never shrank from lavish expense), began once more to besiege the Castle of S. Angelo, and ere long he obtained its surrender. This he managed, it is said, by promising to spare the life of Crescentius; but he did not keep his promise. Crescentius was beheaded, and his dead body, after being hurled down from the rampart of the fortress, was suspended by the feet to a gallows on Monte Mario. Capital punishment was also inflicted on the chief magistrate of each of the twelve quarters of the city. Thus this fantastic restorer of the Roman Empire, this devout founder of churches and convents, this pious adorer of hermits, showed that, when occasion offered, he knew how to act the part of a cruel German Imperator.'

CHAPTER II

THE NORMANS

THE brilliant episode of the Norman supremacy in Sicily and South Italy is so interesting—especially to those who make any claim to Norman descent—and influenced so greatly Italian history, that, although the main facts were necessarily mentioned in my sketch of this period, I shall devote a few pages to the subject.

The Normans, whose forefathers, like most of the early inhabitants of Northern and Central Europe, probably came from the far East and belonged to the so-called Indo-Germanic stock, seem to have been a race of exceptionally fine, bold, and hardy Norsemen, closely related to the Danes, and like them fond of a sea-life. Impelled by a love of adventure and called by that voice of the South which in these Aryan invaders of dreary and barren Northern lands seems often to have awakened some long-slumbering memories of sunnier climes, they began to cross the stormy deep in their swift black ships, 'following the flight of the swan'; and ere long these audacious *Vikinger* ('creek-men,' 'fiord-men') spread terror along the coasts of Germany and France, and with their light vessels they would even penetrate far inland up estuaries and navigable streams, and sometimes transport their ships from one river to another.

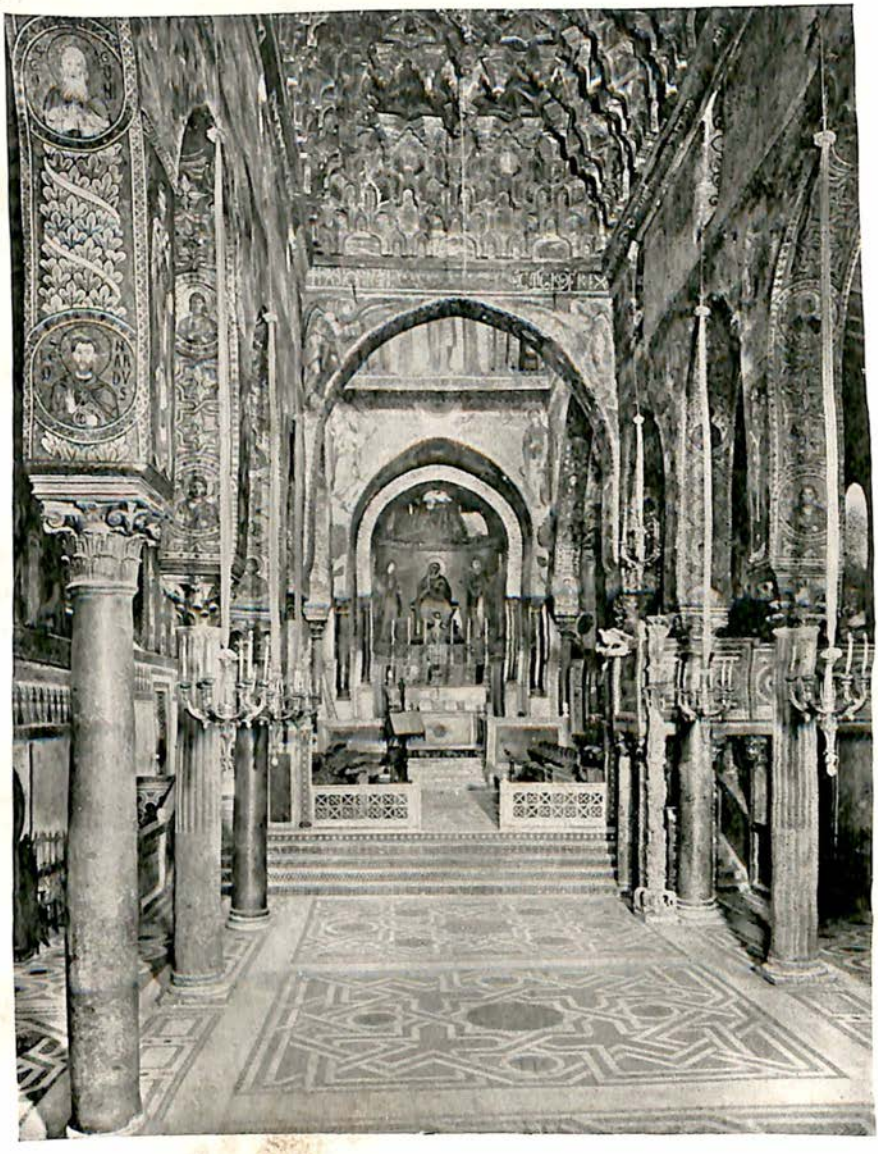
Seeing a fleet of these piratical Vikings sweeping past the coast of France, Charles the Great, it is said, was much disturbed by gloomy forebodings. And ere long his fears began to be realized. In 845 the Normans burnt Hamburg, and a few years later sacked Cöln and Trier and Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) and turned Charles the Great's splendid cathedral into a stable

for their horses. For nearly half a century they infested these regions, but in 891 Arnulf of Carinthia (before he came to Italy and was made Emperor) attacked their strong camp in the marshes of the Dyle and inflicted such a crushing defeat on them that they withdrew from North Germany and left it for the future in peace,[1] passing westward to the northern coast of France. Here they ascended the Seine, took Rouen, and occupied the surrounding country. In 911 the French king, Charles the Simple, ceded this country to the Norman duke Rollon, and before very long the heathen 'Pirates,' as they were commonly called, adopted the language (the *langue d'oïl*) and religion and manners, and even the popular legends, of their new home.[2]

When the Normans had adopted Christianity and had become a nation recognized by other Christian nations their warlike and restless spirit and perhaps also political troubles induced not a few of the nobles to lead bands of adventurers to southern countries. Among these—half knights-errant and half pilgrims—were some Normans who got as far as the Holy Land about fifty years before the Norman conquest of England and the Turkish conquest of Jerusalem. On their homeward journey they landed in Italy. Here they found the Saracens of Sicily, no less hostile than the Fatimite caliphs in Palestine, beleaguering the city of Salerno in order to enforce payment of tribute. Although only forty in number, the Normans, it is said, compelled the infidels to raise the siege; and so impressed was the prince of Salerno, Guaimar, that he begged the strangers to enter his service, and on their refusal—since they 'fought only for their religion and not for pay'—he sent messages, or messengers, with them to Normandy in the hope of enlisting soldiers of fortune. It was

[1] It was in 897 that Alfred succeeded in expelling the Danish Northmen from England—for a time.

[2] Their native language, the *lingua Danica*, as it is called by chroniclers, is said to have been no longer understood at Rouen by about the year 970. It lingered longest at Bayeux. William the Conqueror was fond of using it. Relics are found in a few names, such as Bec (= *beck*, *Bach*, a brook), Caudebec, etc.



33. Cappella Palatina, Palermo

perhaps this same band of pilgrims returning from Palestine which (as related on a former occasion) was encountered near Monte Gargano by a certain soldier of fortune named Melus or Melo. This man is said to have been a fugitive from the (then) Byzantine town of Bari and to have made arrangements with the Northmen like those attributed to Guaimar for the purpose of wreaking vengeance on the Byzantines.[1]

Such are the stories that account, perhaps truly, for the appearance, about 1018, of various bands of Norman warriors in South Italy. Melo's attempt at revenge proved a failure, in spite of the valour of his Norman mercenaries, and the Byzantines for a time extended their power very considerably (see p. 346). But the service of Northmen was eagerly sought by the Duke of Benevento and other princes, as well as by the Byzantines themselves, and the number of these formidable fighters increased so rapidly that ere long they were able to lay claim to territory that they had helped to conquer; and thus they began to form independent communities. The right to do so was conceded them, about 1028, by Conrad II, who allowed them to settle in the territory of Capua in order to counteract Pandulf, the rebellious despot of that city; and Pandulf's enemy, the Duke of Naples (Sergius), rewarded the Normans for their assistance by giving their leader, Rainulf, the town of Aversa. This town of Aversa, which is twelve miles north of Naples, was the first fixed abode of the Normans in Italy, and formed, as it were, the nucleus of their future kingdom.

Besides the Normans at Aversa there were many groups that had no settled abode but took service wherever fighting was going on, and their numbers were constantly being increased by new arrivals from the north. Now Guaimar of

[1] Gibbon, who does not mention the siege of Salerno, but gives a picturesque account of this other episode, speaks of Melus as 'a stranger in the Greek habit, who soon revealed himself as a rebel and a mortal foe of the Greek Empire.' Other writers say that he was of Lombard origin, and so probably, to judge from his name, was Guaimar (Weimar). If so, doubtless the common Northern origin helped towards an understanding. How the pilgrims got to Gargano, and whether it was before or after their exploit at Salerno, is not explained.

Salerno, whom the Saracens with their powerful fleets were for ever annoying, joined forces (1038) with the Byzantines of South Italy in an invasion of Sicily, which for two centuries (ever since the fall of Palermo in 831) had been in possession of the infidels. This invasion, though a *fiasco*—for the leaders quarrelled and the Christian forces soon returned to Italy—is memorable because one of the chief warriors in the Norman contingent was an elder brother of the celebrated Robert Guiscard—one of the twelve sons of Tancred of Hauteville. His name was William of the Iron Arm, and he called himself Count of Apulia, and according to his biographer [1] he was 'a lion in war, a lamb in society, and an angel in council.' With his 'iron arm' he is said to have 'unhorsed and transpierced the emir of Syracuse,' and the small band of his fighters discomfited a host of 60,000 Saracens. But in spite of such exploits all was in vain, and not till fifty years later was the Norman conquest of Sicily complete.

During these fifty years (*c.* 1040–90) the Norman power in South Italy increased greatly. William of the Iron Arm died, but other valiant sons of Tancred of Hauteville arrived from their northern home. Drogo took the place of William, and when Drogo fell by the hand of an assassin his brother Humphry succeeded to the title of Count and to the leadership of the combined forces of Northmen in Apulia and Calabria. In 1053 took place the fight (see p. 352) in which Humphry's Normans, aided by their countrymen of Aversa under Count Richard, totally defeated, not far from Gargano on the Adriatic coast, the German and Italian troops of Leo IX, and took the Pope himself prisoner; and it may be remembered that the victors prostrated themselves in reverence before their prisoner, begging his pardon—but kept him as a hostage for six months. Finally, when released, or to obtain his release, the pontiff recognized as a *fait accompli* the conquests of the Normans, and if he did not formally invest Humphry with the title of Count or Duke of Apulia and Calabria, this was certainly done six years later by Pope Nicholas II in the

[1] See Gibbon, ch. lvi.

case of Robert Guiscard, the brother and successor of Humphry. Nicholas had apparently no such cause of gratitude as Leo had, but there were, as we shall see, political reasons to account for his apparently impulsive generosity; for he not only liberated Robert from excommunication [1] and granted him investiture as Duke of Apulia and Calabria, but even promised to recognize him as Duke of Sicily as soon as ever he succeeded in wresting the island from the Saracens.

Robert Guiscard (or Wiscard, 'the Clever'), the sixth son of Tancred of Hauteville, was at this time forty-four years of age. He reigned as duke, after his recognition by Nicholas, for twenty-five years and developed the power of the Normans in Italy very greatly. At first he, as also Richard of Aversa (or rather Capua, of which city he had been made prince), was friendly to the Popes, but when Hildebrand was elected troubles broke out; for the growing power of Robert did not at all suit the ambitious plans of the new Pope. However, this state of things was finally changed entirely by the clever policy of Hildebrand. It will be remembered that long before he was Pope the monk Hildebrand had guided the counsels of the papal court; indeed, Nicholas II and Alexander II were merely his tools. It was his acute policy that had caused Nicholas to recognize Robert as duke, and he himself had made such friends with the other Norman chief, Richard of Aversa and Capua, that this prince had helped him to give the *coup de grâce* to Antipope Benedict. Now when he, Hildebrand, became Pope and the Investiture trouble began he was far-sighted enough to foresee that an alliance with the Normans would be a necessity in his conflict with the Emperor; and when, after the humiliation of Henry IV at Canossa, the conflict seemed likely to be renewed with still greater bitterness he was determined to secure the friendship of Robert Guiscard,

[1] It seems that he was excommunicated for having taken Monte Cassino and turned the monks out. Matthew Paris relates that he effected the capture by introducing himself as a dead man lying on a bier—a device worthy of his cognomen. Dante places Robert Guiscard in the great Red Cross of Mars in Paradise, evidently on account of his later submission to the Church and his wars against the Sicilian Saracens.

who had quite lately increased his power by making himself master of Salerno, and thus extinguishing the last Lombard principality in the south of Italy. Hildebrand's statecraft had in this case a surprising success. Duke Robert, for what reasons it is not easy to see, not only accepted the Pope's overtures, but actually did homage to him for his dukedom (a homage paid by kings of the Sicilies for 600 years) and confirmed the papal claim to Benevento—a claim which remained recognized till the year 1860. From this time onward the Normans of South Italy were a pillar of strength to the Church of Rome.

For some ten years before this occurrence Robert Guiscard had been helping his youngest brother, Roger, whom he had sent against the Saracens in Sicily. In 1072 he had been present at the capture of Palermo, which, after having been 240 years in the power of Arabian and African Moslems, was now to become the capital of Christian monarchs whose near ancestors had been Scandinavian Vikings. Roger proclaimed himself Count of Sicily, but it was nearly twenty years before he had completely subjugated the whole of the island and had enrolled the Saracens as his soldiers and subjects.

Meanwhile Robert Guiscard, having assimilated the last of the Lombard states and having subjugated Saracens and Byzantines, had formed the design of following up his conquests on the other side of the Adriatic and possessing himself of Constantinople itself. His campaigns in Sicily had necessitated the formation of a fleet, and the blood of the old Vikings stirred in his veins as his new ambition [1] urged him to collect or build more than a hundred warships and to set forth across the sea with a force, it is said, of 30,000 men—not a few being Saracens who had accepted service in his army. He occupied Corfu and laid siege to Durazzo (Dyrrachium). The Eastern Emperor, Alexius Comnenus, then appealed to Venice, and Venice, jealous of the new sea-power, responded. With a swarm of galleys Doge Selvo attacked and seemed on the point

[1] It really seems as if Robert Guiscard had the 'colossal ambition of uniting in his own person the divided Empire of the Romans' (Okey).

of overpowering the besieging fleet, but Robert and his Normans turned the fortune of battle and soon afterwards entered Durazzo (1082). It seemed now almost likely that he might make a dash for Constantinople—whither from Durazzo led the fine Roman military road, the Via Egnatia. But matters at Rome had become very serious. The Emperor Henry IV had, as we know, seized the Leonine quarter, and Pope Gregory was closely invested in S. Angelo and was sending pitiful appeals to Robert. He thereupon left the charge of the war in Dalmatia to his son Bohemund and hastened back to Italy, put Henry to flight, released Hildebrand, and brought everlasting shame on his good fame by allowing his troops to plunder Rome.

This happened in the early summer of 1084. In the autumn he again reached Dalmatia, in time to repel another violent attack by the Venetians and Byzantines, whose losses this time, it is said, amounted to 13,000 men. Doge Selvo fled back to the lagunes with the remnant of his ships and was deposed.[1] His successor, Vitale Falieri, made great efforts to avenge the disgrace, and he met with some success; but what put an end to the Norman attempt on the Eastern Empire was the death of Robert Guiscard. He was struck down,[2] perhaps by the plague or by poison, when endeavouring to capture the island of Cephalonia (July 1085).

The younger of Robert's two sons, Roger Borsa, was the favourite of his father and managed to secure succession to the dukedom. The elder, Bohemund, had to content himself with Taranto. In 1097 he joined in the first Crusade with several thousand Norman fighters. Stories connected with his exploits in the East—the capture of Antioch by the help of the Genoese and Pisans and by a cunning worthy of the son of Guiscard and of the title (given him by Gibbon) of the Latin Odysseus; the discovery of the 'holy lance' and the rout of a mighty host of infidels; the foundation of a Christian

[1] His long reign as Doge is memorable for the many splendid marbles with which he adorned the newly reconstructed St. Mark's.

[2] He was buried at Venusia—Horace's birthplace—where his tomb is to be seen in the abbey church of S. Trinità.

principality at Antioch—may be found mentioned in Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* and picturesquely described by the historian of the *Decline and Fall.* Chroniclers also relate how he languished four years in a Turkish prison and finally escaped by the aid of a Moslem princess—a story reminding one of Young Beichan[1] and Susie Pye of our English ballad. After his escape he seems to have raised forces in Italy for the recovery of Antioch, but to have made a futile attack on Durazzo and to have returned to Taranto, where about 1112 he died. Roger Borsa had died shortly before this, and the dukedom of Apulia had passed into the hands of his son William, who, although feeble in body and mind, managed to uphold his authority for the next sixteen years (1111–27).

Now in the meantime Robert Guiscard's youngest brother, Count Roger, had completely conquered the Saracens in Sicily. Like Robert, he attained seventy years. At his death, in 1101, his only sons were two children of eight and of six years. The mother, Count Roger's third wife, Adelaïda of Monteferrato, was regent for the elder, Simon, until he died in 1105, and for the younger, Roger, until he came of age in 1112. She then went off to Palestine, where she married Baldwin (Godfrey's brother), the King of Jerusalem.

We hear little of Count Roger the Second of Sicily until the Apulian-Calabrian dukedom becomes vacant by the death of his heirless second-cousin William. He now acts vigorously —lands at Salerno, claims the succession, receives the homage of his adherents, sends envoys to Rome to announce that he would be pleased to receive investiture, and, when Pope Honorius II seems unwilling to move, makes a display of force which soon brings about compliance. Then, after confirming his authority by similar measures throughout the whole of the Norman provinces, he summons a great Council, or Parliament, at Palermo in the year 1130 and assumes the royal crown and title as King of Sicily, or perhaps the Two Sicilies.[2]

[1] Possibly the father of Thomas à Becket, the archbishop.

[2] *Siciliae et Italiae Rex* was sometimes his rather ambitious signature. The expression 'the Two Sicilies' seems of somewhat later date.

34. Roger of Sicily crowned by the Saviour 406
Palermo

It will be remembered that at this time Pope Innocent II had fled to France and the Antipope Anacletus was in power. Anacletus sent a legate to Palermo to perform the act of coronation; but this coronation was regarded as null by the orthodox, and the matter was made still worse when St. Bernard of Clairvaux and the Lateran Council of 1133 declared Innocent sole Pope and annulled the acts of Anacletus (see p. 364). In Fig. 34 is given a mosaic set up by Roger in S. Maria dell' Ammiraglio (now *la Martorana*) at Palermo. It represents the king receiving from Christ the crown refused him by the Pope. But not long after the Lateran Council Pope Innocent had the misfortune to be taken prisoner by Roger, and, just as had happened in the case of Leo IX and Robert Guiscard, the victor treated his prisoner reverently and was rewarded by recognition as King of Sicily, Duke of Apulia, and Prince of Capua.[1]

The hundred years (1087–1189) during which Sicily was under Norman rule form one of the most attractive periods in the long and wonderfully varied history of the island, which ever since the age of the early Sicels and Sicanians (or maybe the Cyclopes and the Laestrygonians) down to that of the Bourbons and Garibaldi has been the battlefield and the home of many races. These Northern princes, descendants of the pirate-kings of Scandinavia, who conquered not only Sicily but much of South Italy (the ancient Magna Graecia) and for a time considerable portions of Dalmatia and Greece, and whose fleets swept the Adriatic and the Aegean and the Levant and even threatened Constantinople, seem to have ruled the polyglot multitude of their Sicilian subjects with wisdom and liberality. They not only allowed the Moslems religious liberty, but employed them as soldiers and also as officials, and were themselves much influenced by Saracen learning and art. Greek and Latin and Arabic were used indifferently in public documents,[2] and in religion there was

[1] It will be noticed that the *kingship* of the continental territories is not mentioned.

[2] Norman-French doubtless remained the home-language, perhaps the court-language, of the princes and the veterans for some time. But the

evidently a strange tolerance, considering that it was the age of Crusades and fanaticism. 'The king,' says Villari, 'as apostolic legate was present at Catholic functions clad in a dalmatic embroidered with golden Cufic characters and bearing the date of the Hegira. In close vicinity were to be seen feudal castles, Greek cities, Mohammedan villages, Lombard colonies, streets occupied by Pisans, Genoese, and Amalfitans. The sound of bells and the chanting of monks mingled with the voice of the muezzin from his minaret, and in the crowd were seen side by side the Arab cloak, the Moslem turban, the Norman coat of mail, the long Greek tunic, and the short doublet of the Italian.' As we shall see, their architecture bears witness to this picturesque diversity. Although doubtless in reality absolute monarchs, they delegated military and civil power to their 'Admirals' (Commanders or Ministers—the word *Ammiraglio* being the Arabic *al Emir*), and appear to have instituted some sort of Parliament, in which the people were represented by lay and ecclesiastical peers, so that we may perhaps regard these Norman kings of Sicily as the first constitutional rulers. At their courts we find many learned and able men, among whom the Englishman Gualtiero Offamilio (Walter Of a Mill) is for us of special interest.

King Roger's successes in war were brilliant, but not permanent. He made some conquests in North Africa, and, following the example of Robert Guiscard, he assailed the Eastern Empire, took Corfu, captured Thebes and Corinth, and even had the satisfaction of learning that Norman arrows had rattled on the windows of the imperial palace at Byzantium.

The reign (1154–66) of Roger's son and successor, William I, was much disturbed by rebellion. He had many powerful enemies. Against the Eastern Emperor, Manuel Comnenus, he held his own vigorously, scouring the Ionian and Aegean with his fleets, as his Viking ancestors had scoured the Northern seas; but a more dangerous foe was Barbarossa, who, in collu-

Normans evidently had the gift of assimilation, as proved by the rapid disappearance of the *lingua Danica* in Normandy. Also by this time doubtless the Sicilian-Italian was largely in use as a *lingua volgare*.

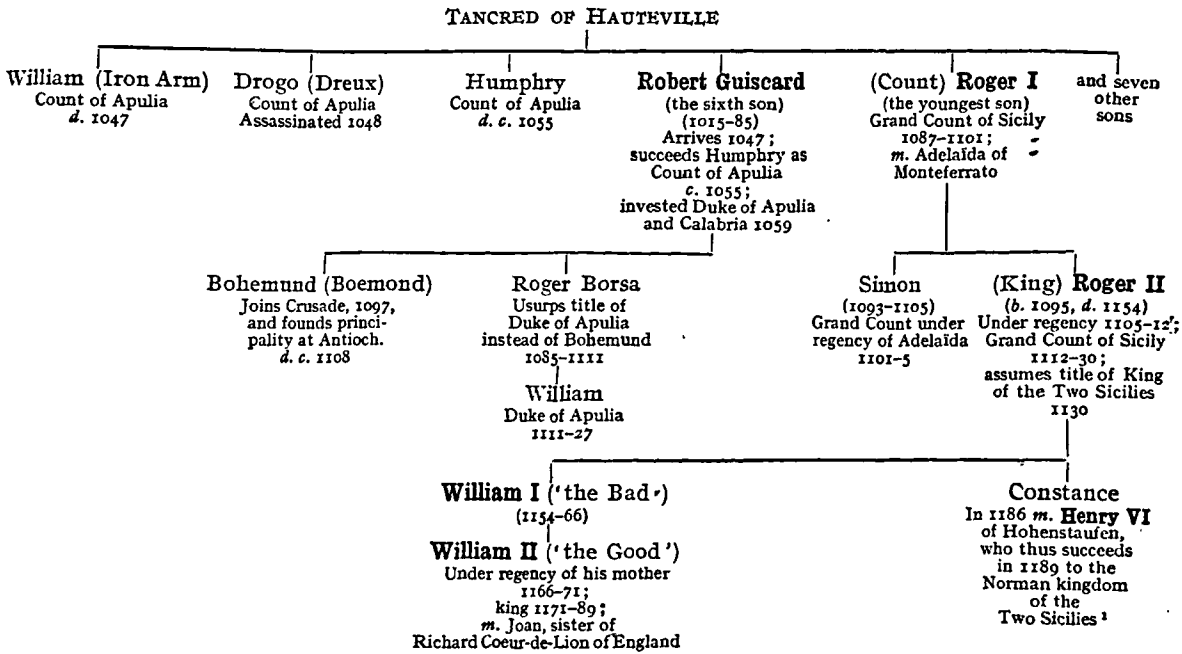
35. King Roger's Tomb
Palermo

sion with the English Pope Hadrian and depending on the Pisans for a fleet, seriously designed the conquest of the Two Sicilies and incited a widespread insurrection of the nobles of Apulia against their Norman ruler. William succeeded, however in conciliating Pope Hadrian, who graciously vouchsafed him investiture.[1] Then he turned furiously on the Apulian barons and inflicted on them condign chastisement —earning by his revengeful cruelty the name of William the Bad. In Sicily too the feudal nobles rebelled, massacred many of the Saracen adherents of the king and succeeded in capturing and imprisoning him; but the people rose in his favour and set him free, and his last years seem to have been stained by further atrocities perpetrated against the recalcitrant barons. Doubtless he was of a violent, revengeful, and sanguinary nature; but his biographers belonged to the feudal and ecclesiastical parties, and perhaps from the people's point of view he deserved scarcely more than his son to be handed down to fame as William the Bad.

However that may be, we need not doubt that his son was deservedly called William the Good, for during his reign of twenty-two years (or seventeen, if we subtract the regency of his mother, Margherita) there was no sign of rebellion or discontent. When his father died in 1166 he was a youth of thirteen. His education had been entrusted to tutors sent from Normandy by his princely relatives—to Stephen of Rouen, Peter of Blois, and the Englishman Walter Of a Mill, who as his special adviser and his chancellor exercised great influence on him, and through him on the weal of the state, and has handed his own name down to later ages by the splendid churches which, as Archbishop of Palermo, he helped to found. It was also doubtless through his influence that William married an English princess, Joan, daughter of Henry II and sister to Richard Coeur-de-Lion. The wisdom and liberality of William II are evidenced not only by the

[1] It is ever again a matter of surprise that these Norman princes should have been so anxious to profess themselves feudatories of the Papacy; and how the Popes upheld their fictitious right to confer investiture is also a puzzle.

NORMAN DUKES AND KINGS OF SICILY AND SOUTH ITALY



[1] On the decease of William II the Sicilians chose Tancred, Count of Lecce, an illegitimate son of Duke Roger, son of King Roger. But Tancred died in 1193, and his young son, under the regency of his mother Sibilla, took the title of William III. But in 1194 both fell into the hands of Henry who sent them to Germany and had them blinded. It is interesting to note that very soon after William II died (November 1189) Richard Coeur-de-Lion of England, whose sister Joan William had married, was in Sicily, on his way to the East, and that he stormed Messina, enraged at his sister being put aside in favour of Tancred or Constance. Joan, the Sicilian Queen-dowager, accompanied Richard to the Holy Land.

peaceful and prosperous state of his own dominions but by his foreign policy. He made an alliance of twenty years with Venice, and probably saved that city from destruction by the resentful Byzantines. He also warmly supported the North Italian republics in their desperate struggle for liberty, and took part through his envoys in the celebrated conference at Venice in 1177, when Barbarossa made peace with the Pope and with the Lombard cities.

As a great and good ruler William II of Sicily has been immortalized by Dante, who places his soul, in the form of a bright star, in the constellation of the mighty Eagle in the heaven of Jupiter—the symbol not only of the Roman Empire, but of all just government.[1]

It was however also on account of his wars against the Moslems and anti-papal Byzantines that William won from monkish chroniclers the name of 'Good'—not that these wars were very glorious or very justifiable. About 1180 a great fleet, carrying, it is said, 80,000 men, was sent across the Adriatic and captured Durazzo. It then sailed round to Thessalonica, which was also taken. But a furious tempest, such as wrecked the fleet of Darius off Athos, is said to have caused the loss of 10,000 lives; and this disaster was scarcely counterbalanced by a great naval victory won afterwards over the Greek fleet near Cyprus. William also sent ships to the East, though he did not himself join in the third Crusade, when, as we have seen, the capture of Jerusalem by Saladin in 1187 incited so many princes—among them the young Richard Coeur-de-Lion and the aged Barbarossa—to undertake in person the recovery of the Holy City.

Not long before Frederick Barbarossa started for the East—whence he never returned—the marriage of his son Henry with the heiress of the Norman kingdom of the Two Sicilies took place at Milan. William had no children. Some three years before his death, on the urgent advice of his English

[1] *Par.* xx, 62. The star-like souls of William the Good, of Ripheus the Trojan, Hezekiah, Trajan, and Constantine the Great form the circle of the Eagle's eye, in the centre of which blazes the soul of King David.

counsellor, Of a Mill, he took the disastrous decision—disastrous for the future of Italian patriotism—to favour this marriage of his aunt Constance with the Hohenstaufen prince. It is asserted by some old writers that the princess Constance, now middle-aged, was taken out of a convent in order to be married. Dante, who accepts this story and places her soul in the sphere of the inconstant moon, speaks (through the mouth of Beatrice) of her 'affection for the veil' and gives us a sermon on vows broken voluntarily or through compulsion. Machiavelli asserts that Pope Celestine III (an evident error, for Celestine was not Pope till 1192) *trasse di monastero Gostanza, già vecchia figliuola di Guglielmo*, in order to give her as wife to Henry. Anyhow, willingly or unwillingly, she was married to the German—and a hundred and fifty horses bore to Milan their loads of gold and silver and precious stuffs, the dowry of the bride who was destined to become the mother [1] of the 'Wonder of the World.'

With the death of William the Good the dynasty of the Norman kings of Sicily came to an end. Illegitimate claimants appeared on the scene, but, as we shall see later, the Hohenstaufen cause prevailed.[2]

[1] Or, as Dante puts it (*Par.* iii) : 'to bear to the second wind of Suabia [Henry VI] the third and latest potentate [of that dynasty, viz. Frederick II].'

[2] See table of Norman Dukes and Kings. For the churches and palaces of Palermo during the Norman supremacy see ch. iv of this Part. The very striking gifts and the nobler characteristics of Frederick were certainly not derived from the stupid and brutal Teutonic ferocity of his father, Henry the Cruel, but from his Norman mother. A Norman Conquest might have done for Italy what it has done for England.

36. Palermo Cathedral

CHAPTER III

THE RISE OF THE REPUBLICS

UNTIL *c.* 1200

PARTLY owing to the incompleteness of their conquests and partly to racial differences none of the invaders and foreign overlords of Italy had succeeded in founding an Italian nation. The forces which under some conditions draw various peoples together into one nation manifested themselves in medieval Italy, as they did in ancient Greece, in local patriotism and the formation of a number of independent cities, which, having no organic cohesion, were doomed, like the cities of Greece, never to coalesce into any true confederation, such as forms the stable body of the modern constitutional republic or limited monarchy, but were in a constant process of disintegration, except when temporarily held together by external pressure. Internally too the Greek and the Italian cities had experiences which, being the effects of similar forces acting under somewhat similar conditions, offer many analogies and some curious contrasts.[1] Their domestic, religious, and political feuds, their revolutions, the phases of democracy, oligarchy, and despotism through which many of them passed, afford interesting material to the student of comparative politics. But here it must suffice to relate briefly the rise of these Italian Communes, following their development up to the end of the twelfth century—the epoch of the Peace of Constanz—and giving a few details in connexion with some of the more important cities.

[1] The Papacy—a political power possessed of enchanted weapons, so to speak—had scarcely its counterpart in Greek history, although Delphic priest-craft was often a powerful agent. In regard to pitiable internal discords and to traitorous collusion with a foreign foe—Persian, Macedonian, Saracen, German—there is little to choose between Greece and Italy.

Republicanism found of course no opportunity for development under the military despotisms of Goths, Byzantines, Lombards, or Saracens, and it was detested by the civil and clerical feudalism of the revived Empire. The instinctive yearning for liberty and self-rule did indeed, as it was bound to do, give evidence of its existence.[1] The resentment against foreign domination ever and again, from the time of Theoderic onward, found vehement expression—as, for instance, in the serious riots which, at Rome and elsewhere, often accompanied the imperial coronations—and when during the weak rule of the Carolingian princes and the anarchy of the succeeding period many cities were left to fight their own battles against various foes—Saracens, Magyars, Byzantines, Lombard dukes, or rival municipalities—it was natural that they should learn to depend on their own resources and to assert their independence.

We have already seen (Part III, ch. iii) how Venice in early days took advantage of its natural position to form a confederacy of its island towns and to liberate itself both from the Eastern and from the Western Empire. In the south too we find at an early period several maritime cities, such as Naples, Gaeta, Salerno, and Amalfi,[2] asserting independence—not always republican in form—and developing very considerable wealth through their commerce, and sea-power through their fleets, by means of which they made a gallant stand against the Moslem invaders, against Byzantine oppressors, and against the Normans, until they were finally incorporated

[1] Some have tried to trace the Italian Commune back to the Roman *municipium*, others to the popular elements in the Lombard system of government; but the real source is doubtless to be sought in the human breast.

[2] Amalfi, now a fishing village nestling amid steep crags that overhang the Bay of Salerno, was in those days a city of 50,000 inhabitants. Under its Doges and, later, under Norman rule it extended its commerce to Egypt, Syria, and Arabia, and took a conspicuous part in transporting the early Crusaders to the East. An evidence of its sea-power are the *Tavole Amalfitane*, a maritime code which was used through the whole Mediterranean. From a hospital founded by Amalfi in Jerusalem the Knights Hospitallers took their name. All the lower town of Amalfi has been swept away by inundations.

in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies. When the independence of these southern maritime cities was extinguished by the Normans, although the Normans by no means extinguished their commerce, a great part of the Eastern trade passed into the hands of the Pisans, Genoese, and Venetians. At the beginning of the eleventh century the fleets of Pisa and Genoa had succeeded in occupying Sardinia and in driving the Saracens from the Ligurian and Tuscan coasts and seas,[1] and from this time onwards these two cities, under the rule of their republican consuls and popular assemblies, increased rapidly both by land and by sea, Pisa becoming mistress of the Tuscan and the Roman Maremma from Spezia to Civitavecchia, as well as of Sardinia and the Balearic Isles, while Genoa occupied most of the Riviera and disputed with Pisa the possession of Corsica. Both cities also took prominent part in the Crusades and extended their commerce in rivalry to the East,[2] outvying for centuries all other sea-powers except Venice; for Venice had the double advantage of standing in close relationship to the Byzantine Empire and of being an emporium and transit-station for Oriental merchandise destined for Western and Northern Europe, which were now beginning to import largely the culture and the luxuries of older civilizations.

In passing it may be noticed how with the rise of these Italian republics the 'bane of republics' at once began to spread its poison. No sooner did Pisa and Genoa attain sea-power by their victories over the Saracens than they turned their fleets against each other and began those pitiable conflicts

[1] The Saracens had till now dominated Sardinia, Corsica, the Balearic Isles, a great part of Spain and North Africa. They had even plundered Genoa (936) and burnt a part of the city of the Pisans and extended their ravages down to Ostia. In Sicily they were supreme till conquered by the Normans (1070–90).

[2] The Pisans followed up the conquest of Sardinia and Corsica by defeating the Saracens off Tunis and, in 1063, destroying a great Moslem fleet off Palermo. In 1114 they took the Balearic Isles. The zenith of the Pisan maritime power may perhaps be marked by the date 1203, the year in which they transported the fifty-three shiploads of earth from Jerusalem to form their Campo Santo. Eighty years later their sea-power was crushed at Meloria by the Genoese and Florentines.

among the free cities which for centuries drained the life-blood of Italy. And in order to extinguish some of their rivals they even lent their fleets to foreign oppressors and foes of republican liberty.[1]

Besides the maritime cities (among which Venice held of course a conspicuous place and will claim our attention later) there remain for consideration the Lombard and Tuscan cities and also Rome.

The attempts of the Roman people to refound the Republic have been described in the Historical Outline. That these attempts, though for a time crowned with success, should have ended in failure is scarcely surprising when we consider not only the endless conflicts between the Popes and the nobles, but also the fact that, although there was great wealth in the hands of the feudal nobility, both lay and ecclesiastic, the city itself had no such trade as that which formed the foundation of the new Communes. Rome was not a port and a sea-power. It was not the centre of a productive region. It possessed no large and wealthy mercantile burgher class. The population consisted almost entirely of mob and aristocracy—two classes far more widely separated than the plebeians and patricians of earlier days—and between them stood only a small middle class, the members of the military *scholae* (city-militia), who had certain political rights and were allowed to be freeholders, and whose one great ambition it was to gain admission to the ranks of the nobility.

In former chapters many points of interest have been touched upon in connexion with the earlier history of the more important cities of Northern and Central Italy. Here we must limit our attention to some of those which took prominent

[1] For instance, they often lent ships to Frederick I and Henry VI. Imperial avour confirmed, it is true, many of their liberties and aided them against rival cities, but these staunchly Ghibelline and cantankerous 'republics' are a somewhat discreditable phenomenon—one which it is pleasant to view merely as a background to the rusty chains now hung up in the Campo Santo—old war-trophies given back to Pisa by Genoa and Florence in the nineteenth century, when Italy was proving worthy to become a nation.

part in the great republican movement of the twelfth century against Frederick I. This movement was at first confined to a few Lombard cities, among which the chief were Milan, Brescia, Piacenza, Parma, and Modena (as against the imperialistic Pavia, Como, Lodi, Cremona, and others), but the League was ere long joined by cities lying more to the east, namely Verona, Padua, Bologna, Mantua, and Vicenza. These were headed by Venice.[1]

Such an outburst as that which caused the formation of the Lombard League must have been the result of deep and widespread influences that had been at work for many years. Some of these influences we have already noted in the case of the republican movements in the maritime cities. In the case of most of the inland cities of Lombardy and Tuscany the frequent presence, or passage, of powerful German armies doubtless prevented the early development of republicanism, and it was evidently first during the fierce and long-drawn wars of the Investitures (*c.* 1073–1122) that these cities began to realize their own importance as allies and as strongholds and to join one side or other of the great feud, as seemed likely to forward their interests. Florence, as we have seen in a former chapter, was, together with much of Tuscany, long under rulers vehemently hostile to German imperialism, and when on the death of Countess Matilda in 1115 the city acquired a certain measure of self-rule its sentiments remained for many years strongly Guelf. But neither Florence nor any other Tuscan towns—some of which were its enemies and violently Ghibelline—took any active share in the wars between the republics and Frederick, although by this time many of these Tuscan towns (such as Siena, Volterra, and S. Gimignano) had asserted their right to rule themselves

[1] Ravenna seems to have kept aloof and was imperialistic in sentiment. It was under imperial *Podestà*, and later under the Polenta. Ferrara was ruled by Margraves of Este from the days of Henry IV down to those of Tasso—more than five hundred years. Bologna was made a free city by Henry V in 1112 (whence its ensign 'Liberty') and joined the League; but first in 1228 it ejected its nobles and introduced a full republican system, like that of Florence.

by means of yearly elected consuls [1]—an example ere long to be followed by many other cities of Central Italy, such as Spoleto, Assisi, Perugia, and Foligno.

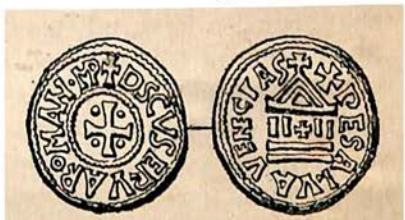
The story of the conflict between the allied republics and Frederick Barbarossa has been told elsewhere. We may therefore now turn our thoughts for a short time to the internal history of the two most important cities of the League, Venice and Milan, without any further anxiety as to fitting our facts very exactly into the framework of wars and general politics.

VENICE (800–1200)

A slight sketch of the history of Venice, or rather of Venetia, from its first origins to the days of Charles the Great has already been given (Part III, ch. iii). I purpose to give here a few more items of interest from its annals down to the thirteenth century. It will be remembered that the ineffectual attempt of Pipin, the son of Charles, to conquer the Venetians resulted in the foundation of the new capital on the banks of the Rivoalto—a site which had proved impregnable. The commander of the gallant islanders who had defied the might of the Frankish invader was elected Doge (811). He, Agnello Partecipazio, was the first Doge of Venice, though there had already been ten Doges of Maritime Venetia, the first, Anafesto, having been elected as early as 697. In 813 the seat of government was formally transferred to the Rivoalto. Here, on the western bank of the 'Deep Stream,' or Grand Canal, where it was later (in 1173) spanned by the first wooden Rialto bridge, had for some three or four centuries existed the market-place of these islanders—the Campo di Rialto—and

[1] After the death of Countess Matilda (1115) Siena asserted its independence, and soon afterwards adopted (unless, as tradition asserts, they had long ago been granted by Charles or Otto the Great) as its ensign a white lion on a red field and the motto 'Liberty.' About this time too Siena produced that great and successful adversary of Frederick, Pope Alexander III. Later the nobles gained the upper hand, and it was with the help of Siena that the Florentine Ghibelline exiles won the bloody battle of Montaperti, on the Arbia (1260). S. Gimignano, first mentioned in the tenth century and long subject to Volterra, won its independence before 1200 and had its consuls and councils.

their earliest church, S. Giacomo, which was founded, tradition says, in the year 421.[1] On the eastern bank of the canal stood amidst a grassy *campo*—the Broglio or Brolo—the ancient church of S. Teodoro, the first patron-saint of Venice, which had been erected (if annals do not lie) nigh three centuries before the days of Partecipazio by Byzantine builders summoned from Constantinople by Narses (see p. 287). Near it was soon built, perhaps by Partecipazio's son and successor, the original Palace of the Doges.[2] Also the original church of S. Zaccaria now arose in order to receive the supposed body of John the Baptist's father[3] and to serve as the burying-place of the early Doges.



VENETIAN COIN OF *c.* 860
See p. xxvii

About 828 the supposed body of St. Mark was brought to Venice, stolen from his tomb in Alexandria, if the tale told by the pious thieves is to be credited, and saved from the impious quest of pagan Saracens by being suspended on the ship's mast and covered over with swine's flesh. A chapel (*memoria*) was erected on the Broglio to receive the relic.

In 976 a great conflagration destroyed this memorial chapel, and also, at least to some extent, the ducal palace. This occurred during the short reign of that Doge Pietro Orseolo I who, as was related in an earlier chapter, was persuaded by St. Romuald of Ravenna to turn hermit, or recluse, and left Venice by stealth (see p. 343). Orseolo is said to have sent to Constantinople for skilled builders and to have spent all his wealth in reconstructing the chapel, or perhaps in

[1] Entirely rebuilt and furnished with Greek mosaics by Doge Selvo in 1073 and reconstructed on another site in 1322. See Ruskin's 'St. James of the Deep Stream' in his *St. Mark's Rest*.

[2] Burnt and rebuilt in 976 and again in 1025, and subsequently much altered.

[3] A present from the Eastern Emperor Leo. The present church, built *c.* 1470 on the same site, just to the east of the ducal palace, contains no ascertained relic of the original building.

beginning the construction of the much larger church which slowly rose on the same site.

That Venice already in these early days, in spite of the wonderful growth of its commerce and its sea-power and in spite of its apparently stable system of government, was exposed to dangers similar to those from which all other Italian Communes had to suffer is evident from the many and serious intrigues and disorders of which we hear in connexion with the election of the Doges, and the many feuds and factions that seem to have taken permanent root in the city. As an illustration of this we may note that in the reign of Memo—a weak and bad man, deposed in 991 on suspicion of murder—the powerful family of the Caloprini very nearly succeeded in sacrificing their native city in order to wreak vengeance on their political rivals, the Morosini; for they fled to the court of Otto II and induced him to bring a powerful fleet and army against Venice, where their partisans were ready to aid the besiegers by treason. Fortunately for Venice, the death of Otto frustrated the design.

Memo was followed by one of the greatest of the Doges, Pietro Orseolo II, who first started Venice on her career of conquest as a great Mediterranean sea-power by overcoming the Croats and Adriatic pirates and annexing Dalmatia. Henceforth the title 'Doge of Dalmatia' was borne by the Venetian Doge, and Venice herself claimed to be mistress of the Adriatic—a claim that found expression in a festival called the *Sensa*, in which the State barges sailed out into the open sea and the Doge was 'asperged' with salt water by the bishop. This festival in later times (*c.* 1180) was developed into the picturesque ceremony of the *Sposalizio*—the wedding of Venice to the Adriatic—a ceremony which was not discontinued till 1797, about eight hundred years after the first institution of the *Sensa*. Orseolo II excited great admiration in the sentimental mind of Otto III. It will be remembered that this pious and hysterical prince harboured designs, never to be fulfilled, of withdrawing from the world, as the first Doge Orseolo had done, and that for a time

he lived in retirement in the monastery of Classe, near Ravenna, where St. Romuald vainly endeavoured to overcome his vacillation. During this sojourn at Ravenna (about 1000) Otto is said to have visited Venice 'disguised in mean attire,' and to have been 'moved to tears' at the glories of the newly reconstructed cathedral and the ducal palace. But in spite of tears Doge Orseolo seems not to have promised—or anyhow not to have lent—the Venetian fleet, which Otto was very anxious to procure in order to forward certain designs not of a religious nature.

By the year 1032 so many of the Doges had been deposed, disgraced, or even killed, often on the suspicion that they aimed at founding hereditary despotisms, that the Arengo passed laws which were doubtless meant as steps towards democracy, but proved to be steps in the opposite direction. Hitherto the Doge had possessed powers almost absolute, though he was elected and deposed by the popular voice. Thus the Venetian state was a republic which delegated kingly powers to its president; and when this proved a dangerous experiment, instead of moving (as the Norman kings of Sicily had moved) in the direction of representative popular government, the Arengo limited the powers of the Doge by giving him two *consiglieri* and compelling him to 'invite' other prominent citizens to give him their advice in matters of grave importance. These privy councillors and this chamber of the *Pregadi* ('Invited') neutralized the absolutism of the Doges, but were themselves the nucleus from which sprang the Venetian oligarchical tyranny and the Council of Ten, of sinister fame.

Fifty years later (1082–84) took place the war waged by Venice, as ally of the Eastern Emperor Alexius, against Robert Guiscard, and the disastrous sea-fight near Durazzo (p. 405) which resulted in the serious crippling of the Venetian fleet and the deposition of Doge Selvo. But from this misfortune Venice soon recovered. The death of Robert Guiscard in 1085 was followed by the withdrawal of the Normans from the Eastern Adriatic, and thereupon the Venetian Doge resumed his title as Duke of Dalmatia. From this time we may date the

rapid development of Venetian power in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Doge Selvo, whose reign of thirteen years came to such a tragic conclusion, is said to have adorned the new St. Mark's with many precious marbles and with Byzantine mosaics, as he had done in the case of S. Giacomo di Rialto.[1] A new building, on the plan of the ancient church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople, had been perhaps begun by Doge Orseolo I soon after the conflagration of 976, but whether Orseolo's building was destroyed by another fire or was never completed, and was demolished, is unknown. Anyhow the reconstruction of St. Mark's in the Byzantine style is usually dated from about 1065—shortly before Selvo's reign. (That the remains of the old memorial chapel and the still more ancient church of S. Teodoro were incorporated in the new building is proved by the fact that some thirty years ago portions of these churches were discovered in the present edifice.) In 1094 the new and magnificent church was ready for consecration; but since the great fire of 976 the body of St. Mark had disappeared—apparently devoured by the flames. The wondrous story of its opportune recovery—its miraculous self-revelation by perfume and an extended gold-ringed hand—need not here be narrated. To those of us who may be slow to accept the legend as represented by Venetian artists conviction may be brought by the statement that in 1811 the recovered body, or what did duty for it, was discovered in the crypt of the church, and that on the finger was found the famous gold ring, and not far off a metal plate inscribed with the date October 8, 1094, and the name of Selvo's successor, Doge Vitale Falieri.

Among those who at this time visited Venice to pay reverence to the recovered body of the saint[2] and to see the new cathedral

[1] See p. 419 *n.* Selvo's love for Byzantine architecture and mosaics was doubtless encouraged by his wife, a Greek princess *di tanta delicatezza* that she used to bathe in dew and use a golden fork, instead of her fingers, to carry food to her mouth (Okey's *Venice*).

[2] The extent to which the dead bodies of saints (some perhaps genuine) bulk in the history of Venice is remarkable. We hear, for instance, of St. Stephen's body, stolen from Constantinople; of a hand of John the Baptist and the corpse of his father, both given by Eastern Emperors; of the bodies

37. S. Marco, Venice

with its Oriental mosaics and marbles was Henry IV. He was accorded a magnificent reception, and in return for privileges vouchsafed to Venetian merchants he probably received the promise of aid from the Venetian fleets against his many enemies—for at this period of his reign he was not only still engaged in his desperate struggle against the Papacy and against revolted cities in all parts of Italy, but was already being involved in the more tragic conflict with his own sons.

In the first and second Crusades (1095–99 and 1147–49) the Venetians took a brilliant part, perhaps more from commercial than from religious motives—*pace* Mr. Ruskin, who assures his 'cockney friends' that though Venice was intensely covetous she was sincerely pious, and that she was covetous not merely of money but of fame and marble pillars. Perhaps as evidence of her commercial jealousy we may note the fact that in the first Crusade she had a very severe and victorious naval combat with the Pisans off Rhodes, and as a specimen of her covetousness of marble pillars we may call to mind the three magnificent columns brought home in 1127 by Doge Michieli, who had gone to the East to succour King Baldwin of Jerusalem, had inflicted a terrible defeat on the Saracen fleet off Jaffa, had helped to capture Tyre, and on his homeward voyage had seized and ravaged many islands belonging to the Eastern Emperor. Among the splendid spoils that he brought in triumph to Venice were the corpses of two saints already mentioned and these three great columns—one of which still lies somewhere in the Grand Canal, while the other two were with very great difficulty erected by the skill of a Lombard engineer, Barattieri, and have stood for the last seven hundred years and more in the Piazzetta.[1]

of S. Isidoro and S. Donato, the acquisition of which was regarded as a greater triumph than the capture of Tyre or Jerusalem.

[1] For details see guide-books and Ruskin's pugilistic *St. Mark's Rest*; also *Venice*, in *Mediæval Towns*. A strange commentary on the assertions of chroniclers, ancient and modern, in regard to the immense prosperity of Venice at this period is the statement made by others that during the reign of Doge Vitale Falieri (1085–96) *two-thirds* of the citizens perished from famine and earthquake.

In 1172 another change was made in the constitution. The Doge's authority was again limited, but once more what was doubtless believed by the people to be a measure tending towards democracy really increased the power of the nobles. The *sestieri* (six wards of the city) were nominally allowed to elect the great annual Council; but although in the first instance this body was elected by twelve nominees of the wards, after the first year the Council itself chose the twelve electors. It thus became practically self-elective. It also delegated a small committee of its members to choose the Doge. Thus the people were defrauded of their elective powers.

In 1177 took place at Venice the dramatic meeting of Frederick Barbarossa and Pope Alexander III. The scene has already been slightly sketched (p. 374). During the third Crusade (1189–92)—the Crusade in which Frederick Barbarossa lost his life—the Venetians were once more induced by commercial and perhaps other motives to send a powerful fleet to the East, where they distinguished themselves at the relief of Tyre and the siege of Acre.

In 1193 was elected as Doge the famous Enrico Dandolo, whose name perhaps first became familiar to some of us through Byron's well-known line—though whether we are right in calling him 'blind old Dandolo' seems doubtful.[1] During half a century he had already distinguished himself greatly both in diplomacy and in war, and although he was now about eighty-five years of age we shall hear much more of him in a later chapter—for at the age of ninety-seven he was twice captor of Constantinople, and his feats at the storming of this city have invested him with a nimbus of fame which even the iniquity and the horrors of this so-called fourth Crusade have failed to dim.

[1] 'The alleged blindness of Dandolo,' says Mr. Okey, 'is one of the enigmas of history. The chroniclers are hopelessly at variance.' One of these, who was his constant companion (Villehardouin), asserts that he 'could not see a whit.' Others do not mention the subject.

Milan

The story of Milan offers a very striking contrast to that of Venice. It was neither a sea-power nor a wealthy trade-mart. It possessed no natural defences, and lying close to the northern gates of Italy it has ever been the prey of invaders, and probably more than any other European city, except perhaps Rome, has suffered from devastation and enslavement ever since the fall of the Roman Empire down to our days. Venice, though not by any means always a model of political freedom, was autonomous under her own Doges during eleven centuries (697–1797), whereas Milan was twice almost totally razed to the ground, and, except for about two centuries (1076–1277) of stormy and precarious republican liberty, groaned during all these long ages under taskmasters of many nationalities.[1]

Of Roman Mediolanum, although from the days of Diocletian to those of Attila it was the residence of the Western Emperors and is said to have equalled Rome in extent and importance, there is scarce a relic extant save the sixteen Corinthian columns in the Corso della Porta Ticinese. From the age of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine have survived probably only certain parts of the basilica of S. Ambrogio (wholly reconstructed in the ninth century), and although the Franks and Burgundians, who in 538 sacked the city and massacred, according to Procopius, 300,000 of the inhabitants, are said to have spared a few churches, the oldest complete edifice in Milan is probably S. Lorenzo, which was built[2] on the foundations of a Roman temple a few years after this catastrophe.

Ever since the time of St. Ambrose the Church of Milan, like that of Ravenna, was inclined to assert its independence of Rome, and in seasons of danger or disorder after the fall of the Lombard kingdom the Archbishops of Milan sometimes

[1] Goths, Lombards, Franks, Saxons, Franconians, Hohenstaufer, the Visconti, Sforzas, Louis XII, Francis I, Charles V, Philip of Spain, Austrians, Buonaparte, Austrians again. The French took Milan four times.

[2] In imitation of S. Vitale in Ravenna. There are several Romanesque churches (Simpliciano, Sepolcro, and others) that survived the later catastrophe of 1162.

took the lead in the city and assumed the reins of civil government. A striking example of this is seen in the case of Archbishop Aribert (Heribert, or Herbert), who for about ten years, 1035 to 1045, made stand against the Emperors Conrad II and Henry III. At first he was an imperialist (for his coronation of Conrad and Gisela see p. 348) and headed the hereditary nobles against the people and the petty nobility (*vavasors*); but he was suspected and arrested by Conrad. Finally he set himself at the head of the popular party and defied the imperialist nobles and the forces of the Emperor, who attacked Milan, but died while it was still being besieged. Aribert seems to have inspired almost the whole of the citizens with enthusiasm for freedom from the German oppressor and successfully repelled the besiegers. An invention of his, adopted later by other Italian cities,[1] proved very effective in arousing and concentrating patriotic ardour. This was the *Carroccio*, which, like the Ark of the Israelites, accompanied the citizens to the field of battle—a car drawn by oxen and surmounted by a mast bearing a large crucifix and by a yardarm from which waved two ensigns. From this car, or from another that followed it, resounded the bell that gave signals to the fighters.

In spite of his successes Aribert found himself in a very unpleasant position as the opponent of the aristocratic party, to which as a champion of the independent Milanese Church and of the marriage of clerics he naturally belonged. The Cluny reformers and Hildebrand, who represented the cause of the Papacy and of celibacy, favoured the Milanese popular party, as he did, but were bitterly hostile to the autonomy of the Milanese Church of St. Ambrose, of which he, as also the nobility, was a zealous advocate. Finally he withdrew into private life, and shortly afterwards (1045) he died. After his death fierce conflicts took place, the people fighting for

[1] Imitated also by the English at the Battle of the Standard (1138). At Montaperti, in 1260, the Florentine Guelfs made their last desperate stand around their *Carroccio*. This Florentine Guelf *Carroccio* was painted red (like their *giglio vermiglio* of *Par.* xvi), and their bell was, according to Machiavelli, called the *Martinella*.

political freedom and religious enslavement, while the nobility, fiercely demanding liberty for their Church and their married clergy, were ready to betray their civic freedom to the foreign foe. At last the papal and popular party gained the upper hand; the married priests were chased from the churches and their wives insulted in public by the women of the city. A deacon of the Roman Church, Erlembald, seized the supreme power and governed Milan for some time with a Council of Thirty, proving such a zealous champion of the papal party that the Pope dubbed him with the title *il Gonfaloniere della Chiesa*. But there were still many who were devoted to their Ambrosian Church, and when in a tumult Erlembald was slain the Milanese determined to appeal for an archbishop, not to Gregory, but to Henry IV—an act that brought down on Milan thunderbolts from the Papal Chair.

Not long after this we first hear of Consuls at Milan. It seems as if the Milanese had made up their minds to subordinate their religious differences to their republican freedom. For some sixty or seventy years little is recorded—a fact doubtless due to a period of comparative peace and prosperity. About 1154 the curtain rises on the momentous conflict between Frederick Barbarossa and the Lombard cities, and, as we know, Milan was the centre—the *Carroccio*, as it were—around which the battle gathered. The fortunes of the battle, and of Milan, we have already followed.

Florence (down to 1200)

La bellissima e famosissima figlia di Roma, Fiorenza.

Dante

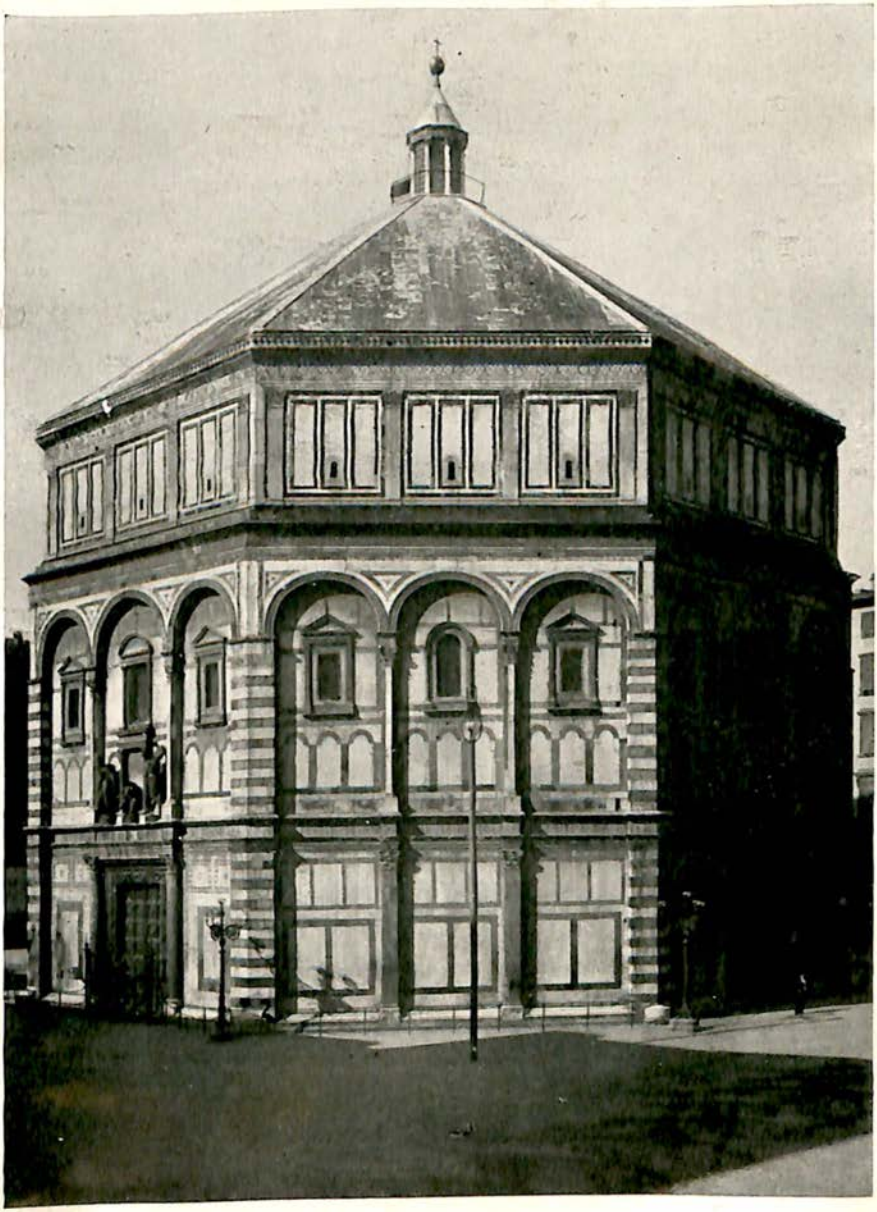
In connexion with Florence, which later will become the chief centre of our interest, there is comparatively little of general importance to record during these four centuries, and the subject is dismissed curtly not only by the Tacitean Machiavelli, but even by Sismondi in his sixteen-volume work on the Italian Republics. There are however various details which merely through their association with the 'fairest daughter of Rome' exercise a fascination on all who love

Italian art and Italian literature. I shall here recapitulate very briefly what is known of the early fortunes of the city and then touch on a few of these details, without attempting to give them any historical continuity.

Florentia was originally doubtless nothing but the river-station of the Etruscan and Gallic hill-fortress of Faesulae. It first grew into a town when the *pax Romana* after the wars of Marius and Sulla afforded more security to the lowlands. Faesulae served as the headquarters of Catiline's army. On its capture its great Etruscan walls (of which remnants still survive) were probably entirely dismantled; but the town continued to exist. Florentia, according to tradition, was founded by Julius Caesar. He probably enlarged and walled it, as Romulus did in the case of *Roma quadrata*, like a Roman camp. He furnished it with baths and temples and a citadel and an amphitheatre, and populated it not only with Fiesolans but with Roman *coloni*.[1] A possible relic of Roman Florentia may survive in the lower portions of the Baptistery,[2] which according to the old historian Villani (*d.* 1348) was originally a temple of Mars, the patron-god of Florence. Another very interesting relic, which finally disappeared in the great flood of 1333, twelve years after Dante's death, was a statue of Mars. It perhaps once stood in this temple. It was afterwards placed on a column near the river, and was overthrown by Goths and lay for centuries in, or near, the water. When the Ponte Vecchio was rebuilt—some say by Charles the Great,

[1] Dante believed himself to be of Roman descent. It is likely that the family (Alighieri) was related to the Roman Frangipani of later days. In his poem (*Inf.* xv) he makes his old teacher Brunetto Latini speak with hatred and contempt of the *bestie fiesolane*, that 'ungrateful and malignant folk that in ancient days descended from Fiesole' and brought discord and other evils into Florence. In the *Paradiso* Justinian speaks of the Roman Eagle having been 'bitter to the hill' beneath which Dante was born.

[2] Evidently built on the site of the temple—perhaps by St. Ambrose, who is known to have founded S. Lorenzo in 394? or by his friend Zenobius? or about the sixth century? or by Theodelinda? It was the cathedral till 1128, when the honour was transferred to S. Salvatore (S. Reparata?), the original of S. M. del Fiore. During about fourteen centuries Dante's *il mio bel San Giovanni* has served as the one Catholic baptistery for Florentines. In it Dante, as also his ancestor Cacciaguida (he tells us), was baptized, and here he hoped, in vain, some day to be crowned as poet (*Par.* xv. 9).



38. The Baptistery, Florence

though it was probably not till about 1180—the weatherworn remnant of this statue was placed at the head of the bridge, where it became an object of sinister associations; for nigh this 'mutilated stone' that guarded the bridge, Dante tells us, was sacrificed to the god of war the young Buondelmonte; and his murder caused the outbreak of the great feud of Neri and Bianchi in Florence.

To return to earlier days—it may be remembered how, about the year 405, Florence together with Fiesole was besieged by Radegast and his vast army of Northern barbarians, and how Stilicho came to the rescue and smote the invaders. Old Villani ascribes the rescue to the prayers of the great first Bishop of Florence, St. Zenobius—the legends and ceremonies connected with whom are known to most who have visited Florence. A hundred and fifty years later Totila is said to have sacked the city, destroying everything but the Baptistery—a deed that Dante wrongly attributes to Attila. Then—after another lapse of centuries—we hear of it being visited by Charles the Great, who, as tradition and an inscription on the façade assert, founded the small basilica of the Santi Apostoli and caused it to be consecrated by Archbishop Turpin in the presence of Orlando and other of his paladins (!).

During the supremacy of the Carolingians and the tumultuous times of the so-called *regno d'Italia indipendente* there is little certain to record. That the city was now flourishing is apparent from the frequent visits paid to it by Emperors, such as the Ottos, and from the fact that many fine Romanesque buildings are mentioned by chroniclers. Among these we may specially note S. Miniato, which Machiavelli says was founded by Henry II in 1002. It is the only complete specimen of all these Romanesque churches still extant in Florence.

Under Otto II and Otto III Florence was ruled (till 1001, or perhaps 1006) by the famous Marquess Ugo of Brandenburg —*il gran barone*, as he is called by Dante, ancestor of five noble Florentine families—whose tomb, sculptured by Mino da Fiesole, is to be seen in the Badía (the Abbey Church, founded

by his mother, Countess Willa, in 978). His successor, Marquess Boniface, who extended his rule as Duke of Ferrara, Modena, and Mantua, was the father of that Countess Matilda of whom we have heard so much.

Under Boniface (*d.* 1052) and his widow Beatrice (*d.* 1076) and their daughter Matilda (*d.* 1115) Florence became an important commercial centre and extended herself beyond the *cerchia antica* of her old walls, from the bells within which she continued even till the times of Dante to 'take her tierces and nones.' This was the Golden Age of Florence that is so graphically described by old Cacciaguida in the *Paradiso*. The city was wholly Guelf in sentiment, and the vile intestinal feuds had not yet been introduced. Men and women lived the simple life of the old heroic age. They could think of something nobler than murdering fellow-citizens. Cacciaguida himself, as we know already, girded on the sword of a Crusader and followed the Emperor Conrad III to the East, where fighting the infidel he was slain—'unswathed from the fallacious world,' to use his own quaint phrase recorded by Dante. And we are told how another Florentine Crusader, one of the noble family of the Pazzi, brought from Jerusalem fragments of the Holy Sepulchre, from which the bishop in the presence of an excited multitude struck fire and lighted therewith the candles on the high altar—a fact that is still commemorated by the Easter ceremony of the white dove, the *columbina della casa de' Pazzi*, which brings the same sacred never-extinguished fire from the altar of the Duomo to explode the fireworks on the *carro de' Pazzi* in the Piazza.

About 1063, during the rule of Countess Beatrice and her second husband, Godfrey of Lorraine, occurred an outburst of popular feeling the violence and obstinacy of which prove how independent and headstrong the Florentines were becoming. The Emperor Henry IV, who, as we know, quarrelled with the Popes on the subject of the election and investiture of bishops, and who had elected many of his own German bishops, tried to force a bishop named Mezzabarba on Florence; by his enemies he is even accused of having sold the bishopric to

the man. For nearly five years incessant tumults raged. In vain did the Pope send Pietro Damiano to restore peace. Finally a champion appeared—a zealot monk—who offered to stand the test of fire, and, unlike poor Savonarola, did so, it is said, unscathed. Thereupon he was made bishop and Mezzabarba had to disappear.

In 1114, one year before the death of Matilda, the Pisans—afterwards so hated by Florence that Dante rails at them as 'foxes full of fraud' and as 'the disgrace of the beautiful land where *si* is heard'—begged the Florentines to guard their country against Lucca while they were absent on their Balearic expedition. This the Florentines did, and they received as a gift the two beautiful porphyry columns which flank the eastern portal of their Baptistery and Ghiberti's bronze doors. It seems an act of mean revenge that the Florentines should have later suspended from these very columns the harbour chains captured by the Genoese from the Pisans. However, reparation has been made in our age, and the chains now hang in Pisa's Campo Santo.

In her famous Legacy Countess Matilda seems to have assumed rights of private ownership which even the most absolute of feudal monarchs would scarcely have claimed. She attempted to bequeath to the Church, and to the Pope as the representative of the Church, not only her allodial possessions but apparently the whole of the Tuscan territory, consisting mainly of fiefs that under the feudal system reverted to the Empire. This Legacy brought many evils in its train, but for Florence it was a blessing in disguise, seeing that the attempted alienation of the state's territory on the failure of hereditary rulers incited the city to assert republican freedom.

The system of communal government that was gradually introduced will occupy our attention on later occasions. It is here sufficient to notice that the one real bulwark of popular power consisted in the merchant guilds (*Arti*), by means of which the middle classes, ever more influential through commerce and the crafts, combined against the nobles. A feat that confirmed the self-confidence of the citizens and made

them realize their strength was the capture and destruction of Fiesole, which, although no longer a strong fortress, had begun to prove a thorn in the side of the young republic.

In 1173 the city was surrounded by its new (second) circle of walls. These included a much larger space than the old *Florentia quadrata*, though (as Professor Gardner says) much which we are wont to regard as essential to Florence stands outside them. A few years later the popular government was for a time overthrown by a rising of the nobles, headed by the German family of the Uberti—ancestors of that Farinata degli Uberti whom Dante saw in the Inferno rising from his fiery tomb in gloomy and proud defiance, 'as if he held Hell in great contempt,' but who surely, as the saviour of Florence from utter destruction after the rout on the Arbia, deserved a better fate.

FLORENTINE COIN OF *c.* 1200
See p. xxviii

The Uberti deposed the republican Consuls and wielded the supreme power for about two years (1177–79), but the popular party proved the victor, and in spite of the attempted suppression of their commune by Frederick Barbarossa they finally compelled the nobles to submit themselves to the popular magistrate [1] and to take up their abode, to a certain extent at least, within the new circle of the walls and the new city wards (*Sestieri*). This arrangement was doubtless deemed necessary, but it introduced a new and terrible danger, for these nobles took to building impregnable strongholds within the precincts of the city [2] and formed so-called 'Tower

[1] It was about this time that instead of Consuls the Florentines instituted as their supreme magistrate a *Podestà* (a 'Power' or 'Authority,' almost a dictator, originally the name of the German governor imposed on a city by the Emperor). He was not a Florentine, but a stranger, and he was not allowed to marry a Florentine nor to eat or drink in the house of any citizen.

[2] A striking example of this is afforded by the fifty towers (now thirteen) of S. Gimignano. See Fig. 54.

Societies' (*Società delle Torre*) in opposition to the *Arti* or Merchant Guilds. Moreover, finding themselves in such close quarters, they naturally began to fight one with another. Things came to a crisis in 1215, when, as has been already mentioned, young Buondelmonte was murdered to revenge the slight that he had cast on the noble family of the Amidei, relatives of the Uberti, by jilting his *fiancée* and marrying a maiden of the Donati clan. This caused the outburst of those family feuds which, complicated with the Guelf and Ghibelline political factions, were to prove so disastrous to Florence for many years to come.

CHAPTER IV

ROMANESQUE ARCHITECTURE[1]

800–1200

THE epithet 'Romanesque' is sometimes applied to all the round-arch styles of medieval architecture which were derived from the Roman—to the Early Christian (basilican), to Byzantine, to Lombard, Tuscan, Norman (French, English, and Sicilian), to German and Spanish Romanesque, even to Saracen, as being influenced by Roman or Byzantine; and some writers go so far as to call Gothic a form of Romanesque, regarding it as the final outcome of the round-arch period of transition. This use of the word can perhaps be defended; but I have preferred to regard the Italian basilican style, the Byzantine, the Romanesque, and the Gothic as specifically distinct,[2] and in a former chapter I have briefly discussed the origins of that architecture which, I think, may equally well be entitled 'Early Italian Romanesque' or 'Roman-Lombard,' if we keep in mind that the word 'Lombard' by no means limits Roman-Lombard architecture to what is now called Lombardy.

Some of the Early Romanesque relics of the Lombard period and of the days of Charles the Great have been already described. During the next period—the reigns of the Carolingians and the succeeding Dark Age—architecture, as all other art, suffered almost total eclipse for about two centuries.[3] At

[1] For further details see List of Illustrations.

[2] The new principles that came into existence with the column-supported arch, the pendentive-supported dome, and the pointed vault seem to denote the evolution of new species. The Romanesque, too, had its new principles.

[3] As we have already seen, it was just during these two centuries (800–1000) that the Venetians began to adorn their city with splendid buildings. (The original St. Mark's dates from 830; the original Doges' Palace and

Rome indeed the obscuration lasted far longer. We hear of restorations and reconstructions, for which the ancient monuments were ruthlessly plundered, and a few curious mosaics and frescos of this age have survived; but until the twelfth century, or later, Rome remained in gross darkness, while in other parts of Italy, both in the north and in the south, a new and splendid architecture was rapidly arising—developing itself in wonderful perfection from that Roman-Lombard architecture which had begun to unfold as early as the days of Queen Theodelinda (*c.* 600), but which seems to have been arrested in its growth until towards the close of the tenth century, in spite of all the favour that for a time art and learning are said to have received from Charles the Great. Possibly the dread that the world would come to an end in A.D. 1000 may have to some extent paralysed Christendom and made the erection of substantial churches seem superfluous; but, whatever the reasons were, soon after the year 1000 almost all the Christian world was seized with a sudden desire to build splendid temples—to cast aside its old attire, as Rodolf Glaber says, writing about 1045, and 'put on a new white robe' (*candidam ecclesiarum vestem induere*).

The Romanesque style resulted from the alliance of ancient Roman architecture with that of Northern countries—the home of the Lombards—and, as Mr. Ruskin has pointed out, some of the characteristics that distinguish it sharply from the Basilican and Byzantine styles were evidently due to Northern influences. For example, a Romanesque church offers generally a most striking contrast to the richly coloured and decorated surfaces, the gleaming columns and marble-covered walls and great mosaics, of Byzantine architecture. We Northerners often seem to distrust bright colour and rich decoration; most of us prefer what is dim and almost colourless—the checker

S. Zaccaria from the same period; the present Torcello Cathedral mainly from 864.) But Venice stood in close relation to the East and Byzantine architecture and did not take any great part in the Romanesque movement, although it possessed some very beautiful specimens of Romanesque work, such as the palaces given in Fig. 56, and the (now terribly restored) apse of Murano's basilica which Ruskin praised so enthusiastically.

and the play of light and shadow amid the gloom of forests or in our great cavernous Norman cathedrals. In Italy the Northmen had the advantage of being able to procure—sometimes to steal from ancient buildings—splendid marble columns instead of having to construct massive piers, and the contrast of marble and stone and brick in Italian Romanesque is often exceedingly beautiful. The chief decorative effect aimed at was, however, not that of colour and reflexion, but the play of light and shade amid mouldings and sculptures and arcades and all kinds of concave and convex work. Thus inside the building we have convex forms, as those of sculptured capitals and high reliefs, to catch the light, and outside we have the hollows of arcades, and colonnaded façades, and sculptured reliefs, and overhanging corbels, and beautiful, deeply receding portals and windows, which catch the shade and by acting as a foil to the sculptures and the marbles invest the building with a beauty which is incomparably finer than that of any old basilica viewed exteriorly, and perhaps outvies the glory of even such a dream of colour as St. Mark's.

A certain amount of colour decoration was adopted in Italian Romanesque—especially in Tuscany, where marble and mosaics were freely used. The wooden roofs, flat (as in Pisa Cathedral) or open-timber (as in S. Zeno and S. Miniato), were gaily painted. But these painted wooden roofs gave way, especially in Northern forms of Romanesque, to ugly barrel or tunnel vaulting, and to the still uglier groined or ribbed cross-vaulting formed by two barrel vaults crossing each other at right angles—a system that was, as we shall see later, happily annihilated by the introduction of the pointed Gothic arch and the invention of the true Gothic vault.

Another, somewhat late, invention of Italian Romanesque, adopted afterwards by Gothic, was the rose or wheel window—magnificent examples of which still exist (see Figs. 25, 26).

The main constructive principle of Romanesque was still that of *rigid strength*. In the ancient system of colonnade and architrave—what Gothic zealots call the system of 'grovelling horizontality,' though its essential principle is that of perfect

verticality—there was no great superincumbent weight and scarcely any side-thrust (none indeed, when the roof was wanting or flat). When the arch-supported roof-walls (clerestories) of basilicas became higher, sufficient buttress work was done by the side aisles; but when Byzantine domes and Romanesque and Norman arches and apses began to assume large proportions it was necessary to build the walls of immense thickness, or to prop them exteriorly. And here it may be noted in passing that the principle of *balance* (instead of rigid strength) which was later used in Gothic architecture allows the most enormous weights to be poised mid-air on a system of arches and piers (or clustered pillars) and external buttresses, so that comparatively thin walls, perforated too with immense windows, suffice to hold the whole in equipoise quite securely—although it must be confessed that the sensation produced by the interior of a great Gothic cathedral, when for the moment one forgets the external apparatus of flying buttresses, is apt to be one of uncomfortable insecurity.

Before giving some of the chief examples of Italian Romanesque it may be well to mention, though it is impossible here to discuss adequately, the much vexed question of the relationship of this style of architecture to that which we call 'Norman' and to German Romanesque. The question is whether the architecture of the Normans in Normandy, which produced the magnificent churches of Caen and which was introduced by the Normans into England, as well as the Romanesque architecture of the rest of France, with its splendid churches of Angoulême, Toulouse, Vézelay, and Arles, and that of Belgium, with its beautiful Tournay Cathedral, and that of Germany, with its fine, though cruelly restored, cathedrals of Mainz, Worms, Trier, and Speyer, and that of Toro and Tarragona in Spain, and that of Palermo and Cefalù in Sicily, and lastly what we call Italian Romanesque, were all derived, as some have imagined, from the inventive genius of Viking master-builders—or whether by some incredible coincidence this style of building arose independently in all these various countries—or, lastly, whether, as I have assumed, it originated

when, about the seventh century, the Lombard princes in North Italy, and afterwards the Lombard dukes in South and Central Italy, employed native master-builders—possibly the famous *magistri comacini*—to erect churches and palaces in Italian cities. If this be so, then it seems very likely that the new style spread from Italy across the Alps, down the course of the Rhine [1] and through Burgundy, and was (*c.* 1060) adopted by the dukes of Normandy. But it may have reached Normandy also by another route, for these Norman dukes had direct connexions with Italy through their kinsmen who were in Southern Italy some forty years before William the Conqueror's mighty St.-Étienne in Caen began to rise.[2]

This question of the first origins of Norman is one that each of us probably prefers to settle for himself as he feels impelled by reason or by patriotism. But in doing this it may be well to remember that the existence of a similar, or even an identical, style in countries far apart is often explainable by the fact that master-builders and workmen were not seldom summoned great distances from well-known centres of architecture. Thus Venice was constantly sending to Constantinople for builders, and Charles the Great and other Frank and German princes doubtless employed many Italian architects in their northern dominions; so one need not feel astonished if in England and France we find characteristics of Italian Romanesque and even of Byzantine and Oriental ornament (brought by the Crusaders), or if in Italy we find zigzag (which, like the ubiquitous *swastika*, may surely sometimes be spontaneously generated), or if, while the Englishman Of a Mill was archbishop and chancellor at Palermo, the church of S. Spirito was built with the massive piers and slightly pointed

[1] The following are the chief early German Romanesque churches. The dates intimate when the original Romanesque portions of these churches (most of them now very much rebuilt) were erected: *Gernrode* (960). *Cöln:* Maria im Capitol and the church of the Apostles (960–1020). *Mainz:* Dom (970–1050). *Trier:* Dom (1016). *Speyer:* Dom (1030–1100). *Worms:* Dom (1120–1200). *Laach Abbey* (1100).

[2] About 1060 Robert Guiscard was building churches in Salerno and other places in that Lombard-Romanesque style which the Norman kings later introduced into Sicily.

39. Ferrara Cathedral.

arches that characterize English Norman of the same date (*c.* 1175). From such facts we need not infer that Italian and Sicilian Romanesque was 'made in England'—or even in Normandy.

A striking and beautiful feature of Italian Romanesque is the campanile. We have already seen (p. 282) that Italian bell-towers date from early days and that some of the old basilicas have very fine circular campanili; but the lofty square campanili that are so characteristic of Italy (and to which the round Leaning Tower of Pisa offers such a striking contrast) are due to Romanesque architecture. In Rome, otherwise very little affected by Romanesque, many beautiful square campanili of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries exist, such as those of S. Maria in Cosmedin (Fig. 21), S. Maria in Trastevere, and SS. Giovanni e Paolo.[1] The Roman campanile of this age has usually storeys of dark brown brickwork separated by cornices of marble or terra-cotta, and a flat terrace at the top (the spires being later additions). Above the basement each storey has on each side generally *two* windows, open or blind, with marble *colonnelli*, whereas in the campanili of North Italy the number of windows, as in the Siena campanile, where each storey has an additional window, increases towards the top of the building (see Figs. 41, 55, 65).

Lombardy and Emilia

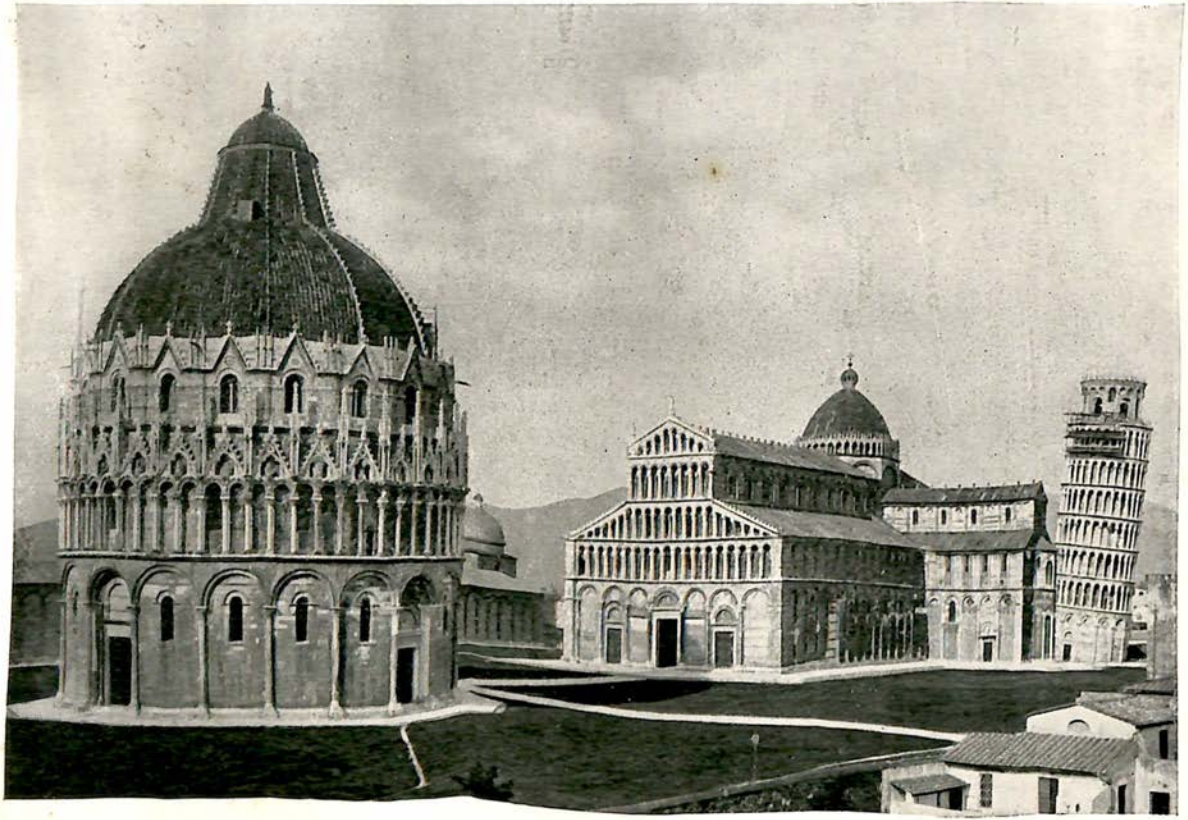
The Romanesque of Lombardy, as one might expect from its half-Northern nature, is often wanting in delicacy of ornamentation and sometimes inclines towards the fantastic and grotesque, but it is without doubt a very much more virile and healthy type than the Tuscan, or perhaps we should say the Pisan. The chief characteristics of Lombard Romanesque churches are the exceedingly beautiful proportions of the

[1] This is the only church in Rome that shows exteriorly distinct Romanesque features, *e.g.* a deeply recessed arcade round the upper part of its apse, built in the twelfth century, after the destruction of the old church by Robert Guiscard's Saracens in 1084.

external architecture; the grand colonnaded façades, sometimes richly adorned with sculpture; the exquisite arcade decoration of the apses; the splendid recessed portals and windows; the projecting porches, with columns often resting on marble lions; the superb campanili, and in later buildings the magnificent rose-windows. The following are the most important of these churches. Some of them will be found briefly described in the List of Illustrations The dates indicate approximately when the Romanesque portions of the churches were originally built.

Pavia: S. Michele (here Berengar, Frederick I, and others were crowned with the Iron Crown. Rebuilt *c.* 1050. Vaulted, like S. Ambrogio. Fine Romanesque portal).
Pavia: S. Pietro in Ciel d'oro (rebuilt *c.* 1100. See Fig. 13).
Verona: S. Zeno (*c.* 1070–1140. Fig. 55).
Cremona: Cathedral (1107–90) and Torrazzo (1260–80).
Parma: Cathedral (1058–*c.* 1200).
Modena: Cathedral (1099–1184).
Ferrara: Cathedral (1135–*c.* 1200. Fig. 39).
Piacenza: Cathedral (1122–*c.* 1200).
Como: S. Fedele (1100? rebuilt *c.* 1265) and S. Abbondio (*c.* 750? rebuilt *c.* 1050, totally renovated *c.* 1870, but has old remains. See p. 280).

Besides these there is a church of great importance, namely, S. Ambrogio in Milan, of which frequent mention has already been made. It is said to have been founded by St. Ambrose about the year 380, but it seems to have been rebuilt by Archbishop Anspert in the ninth century, and was reconstructed in the Romanesque style at latest about 1140. The fine *atrium* dates probably from Archbishop Anspert's time, and the campanile from about 1130. Exteriorly the style of the church is unmistakably early and simple Romanesque; but the inside, which is of the same age, shows most remarkable Gothic features in the ribbed vaulting of nave and aisles, the clustered columns, and the shafts springing upwards from the capitals of the lower piers (see p. 281). The question is whether this new system was introduced from beyond the Alps at a time when it was hardly known in Northern countries, or whether it was actually devised here at this



40. Baptistery, Cathedral, and Campanile, Pisa

early date.[1] This we shall consider when we come to Italian Gothic architecture.

Tuscany

The wonderful group of buildings that suddenly reveals itself as one issues forth from the Via Solferino or the Via Niccola Pisano into the Piazza del Duomo at Pisa impresses on the memory the main features of what is called Tuscan, but might perhaps be better called Pisan, Romanesque. If we have lately visited the churches of Lombardy we cannot but feel that we have before us a variety of Romanesque which might be called a different species. It is here impossible to discuss this point fully, but a glance at Fig. 40 will show that the characteristic features of all three edifices —the cathedral, the round Leaning Tower, and the lower half of the Baptistery (the upper being later and Gothicized)— are that the basement is adorned with columns and tall blind arcades and that the upper parts, especially of the campanile and the façade, have tier upon tier of very beautifully proportioned open colonnades.[2] These handsome façades, seen to perfection at Pisa and less so at Lucca, are scarcely known in Lombardy—and the fact that they are found in Dalmatia would seem to show that they may be due to Byzantine, or Oriental, influences, such as one might expect in the case of Pisa in an age when her fleets swept the Saracens from the seas and visited the Levantine coasts.

There are in Pisa several other Romanesque churches, namely, S. Sisto (*c.* 1090) and S. Frediano (*c.* 1150) and

[1] In *Stones of Venice* Mr. Ruskin regards the vaulting shaft as a 'petrified' form of the wooden uprights in old Northern edifices. 'The upright pilaster above the nave pier remains in the stone edifice. . . . In that form the Lombards brought it into Italy in the seventh century, and it remains to this day in S. Ambrogio of Milan and S. Michele of Pavia.'

[2] Note the arrangement of diminishing columns in the second and fourth tiers of the façade, and the central columns of the two upper tiers above the central arches of the two lower; also the nineteen arches of the first tier as against twenty-one in the second. The date of the façade is probably about 1120, though some put it a century later. Doubtless it underwent much restoration. The campanile was certainly begun about 1175, though not finished till much later.

S. Paolo (*c.* 1220 ?), which latter has a fine Pisan façade. At Lucca we have a number of churches [1] built evidently in imitation of Pisan architecture, but distinctly inferior to the Duomo of Pisa in beauty of proportion, as will be seen from the illustration given of the cathedral, the façade of which dates from about 1204. A still greater want of artistic feeling is shown by S. Michele, in which the gable is built up to a great height above the roof of the church in order to give space for the display of the colonnaded Pisan façade. Another extravagant imitation of this façade is afforded by S. Giovanni at Pistoia.

Of Florentine Romanesque most has disappeared, but besides relics of it surviving in SS. Apostoli, S. Spirito, and S. Lorenzo, there remains one very celebrated and perfect specimen—S. Miniato :

la chiesa, che soggioga
La ben guidata sopra Rubaconte.[2]

In some respects S. Miniato resembles rather a Latin basilica than a Lombard Romanesque church. It is, says Mothes, 'one of the most interesting examples of the transition from the basilican to the Romanesque style, and a proof that the Florentines regarded the Romanesque with as much reserve as later they regarded Gothic.' Its main features are easily observable in the illustration (Fig. 30). Here I can only draw attention to its difference from other forms of Romanesque by remarking that the lavish marble incrustation of the inner walls and of the façade,[3] which is gay with black and white marbles used as surface decoration, with no sign of open arcades or

[1] A very interesting Lucchese church is S. Frediano, originally founded, as also the Duomo, about 570 by the Irish bishop Frigidianus. It was rebuilt *c.* 1120. It has the usual Romanesque colonnade round the exterior of the apse, but with horizontal architraves instead of arches. The square campanile of the Duomo is beautifully proportioned. The round, arcaded Pisan campanile seems to have found no imitators.

[2] *Purg.* xii, 101. 'The church which dominates the well-guided [*i.e.* ill-guided] city above the Ponte delle Grazie.' It crowns a hill on the south side of the Arno. According to Machiavelli it was founded *c.* 1002 by Henry II. Others give 1013.

[3] Asserted by some to be fifteenth-century work or later, and doubtless much restored and with late additions ; but probably the general scheme is of the eleventh century.

41. S. Martino (Cathedral), Lucca

any light and shadow effect, is in spirit, though not in design, rather Byzantine than Romanesque, and may be considered almost more diverse from Lombard Romanesque than even the Pisan. As we shall see later, Byzantine painting (either through Venice or through the Byzantine paintings of South Italy) was supreme at Florence before the days of Cimabue, and probably the marble-encrusted façade of S. Miniato, as those of some other Tuscan churches, is due to such influences.

Central and South Italy

At the epoch when (1000–1100) the revival of architecture took place in Italy Florence was under her Margraves, Ugo and Boniface and Guelf, and was in sympathy neither with the Empire nor with the Lombard cities. Perhaps this accounts for the apparent fact that the Lombard form of Romanesque was not favoured there; and except for one period of short-lived friendship (see p. 431) Florence and Pisa seem to have been in a constant state of rivalry and hostility, so that it is not surprising that the self-sufficient and independent Florentine spirit did not condescend to imitate the productions of Pisan architects.

But in other parts of Tuscany there are some very beautiful relics of Lombard Romanesque work. Toscanella has been already mentioned in connexion with the early Roman-Lombard style (p. 280). The exceedingly beautiful portals and rose-windows of S. Pietro and S. M. Maggiore (Figs. 25, 26) date from *c.* 1040. At Volterra the Duomo was once a fine Lombard Romanesque edifice of the year 1120, and the ancient Baptistery possesses still a very beautiful portal of *c.* 1200 (Fig. 32). At S. Gimignano there are several Knights-Templar churches of the twelfth century, and the Duomo, or Collegiata, which is said to date from *c.* 1148, retains a fine Romanesque nave and columns (Fig. 42). The two great centres of Lombard power in Central and South Italy were Spoleto and Benevento, and here we find, as might be expected, fine examples of Lombard Romanesque. The Spoleto Duomo dates from about 1050 and was renewed about

1150; the Duomo of Benevento is said to have been 'admired by Adalbert of Bremen in the year 1047.' It is Lombard work influenced by Saracenic architecture. A still more striking example is the Hospice-church at Aquila represented in Fig. 49.

Thus the North Italian Lombard Romanesque may be traced southwards through the regions of the old Lombard duchies, until, avoiding Rome, it meets both Byzantine and Saracen (Arab) architecture; and ere long in South Italy and in Sicily we find the Normans assimilating this Northern, Roman-Lombard style, and at the same time being affected by the Southern influences of Byzantine and Arab architecture.

In many towns of Campania, Apulia, and Calabria exist churches (mostly barbarously spoilt) which were originally Romanesque, or were Byzantine, with fine domes, and were rebuilt or enlarged in Romanesque style by the Normans—with sometimes a touch of Saracenic. At Canosa the five-domed Byzantine church of S. Sabino (where, by the way, Robert Guiscard's son, the Crusader Bohemund, has his tomb) shows Norman-Lombard additions. At Trani the Byzantine cathedral has a fine Romanesque portal. At Bari several ancient Byzantine churches received Romanesque additions in the time of King Roger. The cathedral of Salerno was built (*c.* 1070) by Robert Guiscard, and its fine Romanesque architecture is still perceptible, although terribly defaced by modern restoration. (The *atrium*, with splendid ancient columns from Paestum, defies the restorer.) Then, again, at Amalfi and the neighbouring Ravello we have in the cathedrals remarkable but badly spoilt specimens of the South Italian Lombard style. Both were perhaps first erected in the eleventh century, even before the supremacy of Robert Guiscard and the development of Norman-Lombard architecture. But the Amalfi church more probably dates from after the submission of the town, for centuries more or less independent amidst its many enemies, to the Norman king, Roger of Sicily, in the year (1131) which followed his assumption of the crown.

42. La Collegiata, S. Gimignano

Sicily

In a former chapter we have followed from its rise to its setting the short-lived but brilliant period of Norman supremacy in South Italy and Sicily and have noted the picturesque intermixture of races in the population of cities such as Palermo, the residence of the Norman kings. Palermo, as also most of Sicily, had been for more than 240 years (830–1072) in the power of the Saracens. Its inhabitants numbered 300,000, and it is said to have contained no less than three hundred mosques, small and great. The Saracens had assimilated much from the previous Byzantine civilization, and the Normans in their turn, instead of extirpating the infidel Moslems, gave them considerable religious and civic liberty, used them as soldiers and as officials, and borrowed much from their science and art.

Naturally Sicilian architecture during the Norman period shows Byzantine and Saracenic characteristics combined with Norman Romanesque—the main source of which was, as we have seen, the Lombard Romanesque of South Italy.[1] Of the many splendid churches erected in Palermo and elsewhere in Sicily by the Norman kings, especially by King Roger and by William the Good, some were distinctly Byzantine in plan, such as the Martorana (with a dome and three apsides), S. Cataldo (with three domes), and S. Giovanni degli Eremiti (with five), whereas others are in type decidedly Romanesque, such as the cathedrals at Monreale and Cefalù and the church S. Spirito, not far from Palermo,[2] already mentioned as reminiscent of English Norman architecture.

[1] Doubtless there is more than accidental resemblance between Sicilian Norman and the Norman of Normandy, as seen in the case of Cefalù Cathedral, which is evidently on the same plan as William the Conqueror's great St.-Étienne at Caen. The Cefalù Cathedral was probably founded in 1129, and St.-Étienne was finished soon after William's death, which took place in 1087.

[2] Outside Porta Agata and near the scene of the Sicilian Vespers. It was founded by the English Archbishop of Palermo, Of a Mill. Also we must not forget that the Queen of Sicily was at this time an English princess (see p. 409).

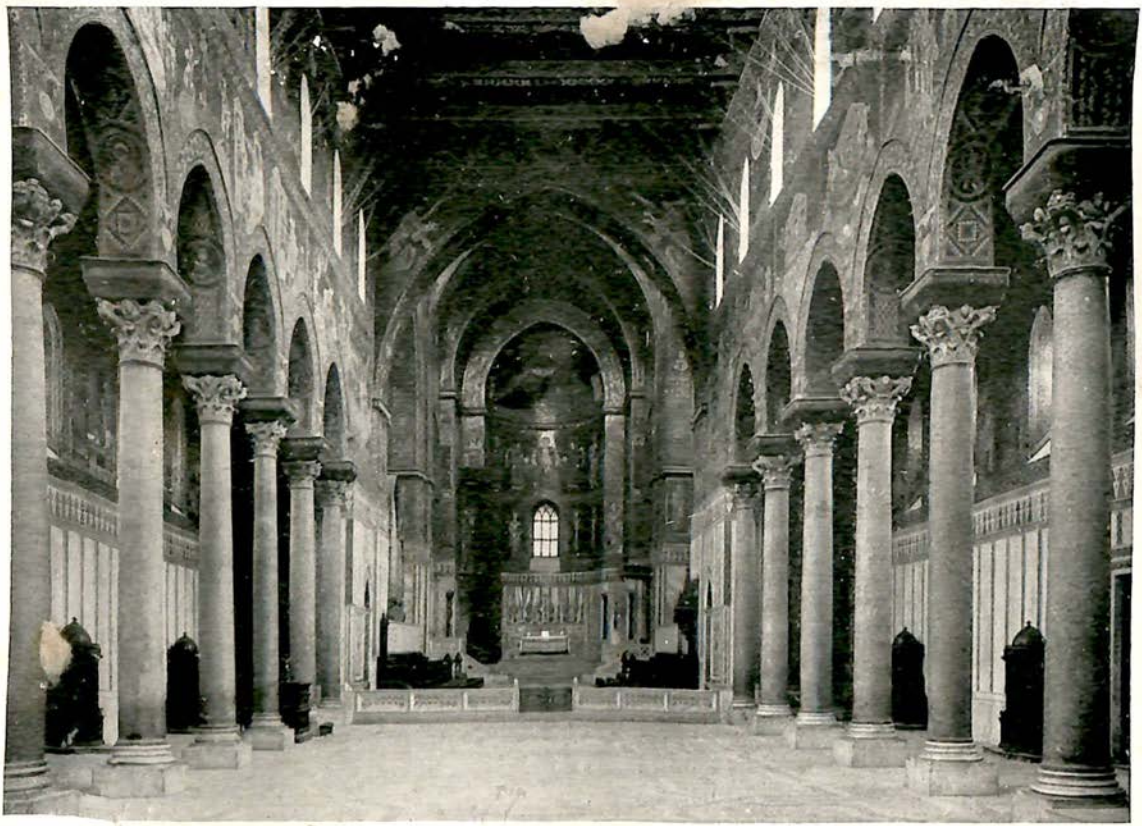
Four of the most important of these Sicilian Norman churches, as well as the tombs of King Roger and Emperor Frederick II, are given in my illustrations, and are described in the List (pp. xxii, xxiii), so here I need only add the remark that the presence of the pointed arch is attributed by some to Saracen influence, while others believe it to be a kind of foreshadowing of Gothic, such as we have already noted in S. Ambrogio. But the pointed arch was used not infrequently in Romanesque long before the arrival of Gothic, and is found also in England in buildings erected before what is called the transition period between Norman and Early English– *e.g.* in Fountains and Malmesbury Abbeys, both of which are pure Norman work and contemporary with the magnificent Cappella Palatina (Fig. 33) built in 1130 by King Roger as the Chapel Royal of his palace at Palermo—once the castle of Saracen Emirs, then what Villari calls 'the first truly regal palace in Europe,' and now, except for the wonderful Cappella, a disappointing ruin.[1]

NOTE ON MOSAICS AND PLASTIC ART IN SOUTH ITALY AND SICILY

1050–1200

In a later chapter we shall consider the origins of the great revival of art in Tuscany and other parts of Italy towards the end of the thirteenth century and shall note the early signs of the new spirit and the influence of the Byzantine painters and mosaic-workers who, especially after the sack of Constantinople by the Latins in 1204, flooded the whole of Italy. Here I wish to draw attention to the state of things in South Italy and Sicily during the period *c.* 1050–1200 in regard to mosaics and plastic art. It is a subject on which much more

[1] Of the other very numerous palaces in and around Palermo only a few relics exist, as the Zisa (built by William I), the Cuba (by William II), and the Favara, a Saracen-Norman castle used later by Frederick II.



43. Cathedral of Monreale
Near Palermo

light will have to be thrown before we can hope to feel any certainty as to the theory that the splendid outburst of art in Tuscany in the days of Niccolò Pisano and Giotto and Dante was largely due to the sculptors and poets, and perhaps even the painters, of Southern Italy.

Byzantine mosaics and Byzantine painting and Byzantine metal-work (not sculpture, which was not favoured by the Eastern spirit) doubtless prevailed for centuries in the parts of South Italy that were subject to the Byzantine Emperor.[1] If archives are to be believed, there was an almost infinite amount of such treasures in these regions, and the number of fine bronze doors of Byzantine workmanship that still exist in the cathedrals of Campania and Apulia is considerable (*e.g.* at Amalfi, Atrani, Salerno, etc.). The dates of these Byzantine doors vary from *c.* 1050 to 1100. And of somewhat later date we find equally fine work done by native artists, *e.g.* the great bronze doors of Trani Cathedral, and others at Benevento and Ravello.

Here and there too we find mosaics that date from the Norman period and are evidently not Byzantine work, as the great St. Matthew mosaic at Salerno. At Salerno also is the famous *paliotto*—an altar-covering with ivory reliefs representing a number of Biblical scenes. The skill displayed in this work is very remarkable. It is certainly not by any artist trained solely in the Byzantine school, and if it really dates from the twelfth century there seems a possibility that this early Lombard Romanesque school of South Italy *may* have ultimately proved capable of producing work that deserves, still more than Niccolò's Pisan pulpit, to be called the 'ark' from which the Tuscan sculptors came forth.

But it is in Sicilian mosaics that we find the most distinct evidence towards the end of this period (*c.* 1140–1200) of a great school of native art. These mosaics are essentially different from those of the Byzantine school, and the fact that at this epoch the great Roman school of mosaics was

[1] Abbot Desiderius of Monte Cassino is said to have imported many Byzantine artists *c.* 1066.

apparently [1] almost extinct—had been so indeed since about 900—makes it fairly certain that a new and distinctly noble style had been developed by Lombard-Norman artists in Sicily.

In the Cappella Palatina at Palermo (Fig. 33) there is a splendid display of mosaics, the oldest and finest of which date from the reign of King Roger (*c.* 1032–40). The dignified and impressive representation of the Saviour both here and at Cefalù is very notable. Cefalù Cathedral (Fig. 44) contains still finer examples of early Sicilian mosaics. The treatment of some of the saints and angels shows perhaps some Byzantine influence, but the splendid figure of Christ is of the Lombard-Norman type. If tradition can be trusted, Roger built Cefalù in 1129, before he assumed the kingly title, and in this case some of these mosaics are probably the oldest of their kind and may have been Byzantine work; but the figure of Christ is attributed to the year 1148.

In the Palermo church called (since 1433) la Martorana from the foundress of a convent, but originally named S. Maria dell' Ammiraglio (King Roger's Admiral, or Emir, who founded it in 1143), there is the interesting mosaic shown in Fig. 34. It once probably adorned the façade. It represents Count Roger receiving his kingly crown from the hands of Christ—a finely imaginative protest against his non-recognition by Pope Innocent II when he assumed the royal title (p. 407).

In the Monreale Cathedral there is a similar mosaic, in which William the Good is represented, like his grandfather, receiving his crown from Christ—the idea evidently having become hereditary. This church displays immense expanses (over 7000 square yards) of mosaics of various dates. They represent scenes from Old Testament history, from the life of Christ and the lives of the Apostles, and introduce numberless saints and angels.

[1] Nevertheless to the twelfth century seem to belong such fine mosaics as those of S. Clemente (Rome) and S. Maria in Trastevere (Fig. 57). Whether these and also the mosaics of the Norman kings were the work of Roman or Byzantine artists or of an independent Lombard-Sicilian school is a point to be proved not only from technique and material, but from choice and treatment of subject and symbolism.

44. Cathedral of Cefalù
Sicily

NOTES ON COINS[1]

PLATE II

FROM *c.* 650 TO *c.* 1313

1. A gold coin of the very degraded 'Heraclian' type (*c.* 670) shows Constans II and his three sons, Constantine Pogonatus (whose beard, grown during an African expedition, gave him his surname) and Heraclius and Tiberius. When Constantine Pogonatus came to the throne he made his two brothers Augusti and gave them equal powers with himself, in imitation, it is said, of the Holy Trinity.

2. Constantine VI and his mother Irene, who blinded him. Gold Byzantine coin of about 800.

3. Coin of the last Lombard king, Desiderius. Electron *tremissis*. *Obv.:* DN. DESIDER℞ (the ℞ is a common abbreviation for *Rex* on the Lombard coins). *Rev.:* A star or flower in a circle and the words FLAVIA LUCA. For 'Flavia' see on Plate I, 17. This epithet is found on Lombard coins applied to Lucca, Piacenza, etc., and may mean that these cities were 'royal burghs' with certain privileges. The names of many other cities occur on this type of coin, *e.g.* Milan, Pavia (Ticino), etc., where probably there were royal mints. Some curious coins like this one ('star *tremisses*' with the name of some city) are extant with a meaningless legend (VIVIVI . . .) instead of the king's name. Also in 1904 was discovered at Ilanz, Switzerland, a hoard in which were many such *tremisses* stamped with the name of Charles the Great. Both these types were evidently issued after the deportation of Desiderius (774), the old *reverse* being kept.

[1] See also p. 117.

4. Coin of Liutprand. *Obv.* of a gold *tremissis*. Bust of Liutprand with diadem, sceptre, cuirass, and military cloak. *Legend:* DN. LUTPRAN ℞. On the *revers e* of this type of Lombard coin a winged figure of St. Michael, patron saint of the Lombards, takes the place of the Victory that is so frequent on classical coins. The *early* Lombard coins (even those of Agilulf and Theodelinda) are barbarous imitations of imperial coinage. About the time of Liutprand (712–44) they become more original, but are still of very barbarous execution and with legends often illiterate.

5. Charles the Great (mould procured from Bibliothèque Nat., Paris). Coins of Charles occur with names of various cities, Paris, Parma, Florence, Rome, etc. This is a rarer imperial coin with portrait (note the moustache). *Legend:* CAROLUS IMP. AUG., and on *rev.* RELIGIO KRISTIANA surrounding the so-called Carolingian temple (see coin on p. 419). The letter M=40 *nummi* (D=20).

6. Louis le Débonnaire. Also from the Bibl. Nat., Paris. For details consult Engel and Serrure, Fig. 402.

7. Ducat of King Roger (II) of Sicily and his son. In 1140, ten years after assuming the regal title, Roger abolished the imperial coinage (the so-called *tari*) and issued silver ducats with his own portrait.

8. *Augustal* of Frederick II (*obv.* and *rev.*). A very fine coin. 'The true precursor of the great Italian coins and medals of the fifteenth century' (Serrure).

9. *Carlin d'or* (¼ ounce) of Charles d'Anjou, issued in 1277 from the mint in the Castel dell' Uovo, Naples. *Rev.* shows the Annunciation.

10. *Real d'or* (¼ ounce) of Charles d'Anjou, issued in 1270, in imitation of the Augustal of Frederick II.

11. Silver coin of the type of the magnificent gold ducats of Peter III of Aragon and Costanza, Manfred's daughter. Issued not long after the Sicilian Vespers (1282). The typical coin of Sicily for the next two centuries. On *obv.* the imperial eagle and COSTA[NTIA] DEI GRATIA ARAG. SIC. REG. On *rev.* Peter's name as king.

45. COINS: HERACLIUS TO HENRY VII
c. 650–1313

12. Coin of Robert d'Anjou, Duke of Calabria, son of Charles II ('lo Zoppo'), and grandson of the great Charles d'Anjou. He was King of Sicily 1309–43. See Dante, *Par.* viii, 76.

13. A fine coin of Pavia of *c.* 1400, but showing older type. On *rev.* a bishop enthroned. Pavia declared its independence after the death of Frederick II in 1250, but afterwards fell under the power of the Milanese Visconti.

14. Venetian gold sequin, first coined by Doge Giovanni Dandolo, *c.* 1285. *Obv.:* Doge Dandolo kneeling and receiving sceptre from St. Mark. *Rev.:* St. Mark blessing. See also coin of much earlier date, p. 419.

15. Silver florin of Pisa (later than 1313) with the name of Frederick Barbarossa, which was kept by Ghibelline Pisa on her coins until 1494 (!)—except during 1312–13, when the name of Henry VII was substituted (see No. 18). *Obv.:* Imperial eagle and FREDERICUS IMPERATOR. *Rev.:* Madonna and Child.

16. Gold florin of Florence of 1304. See the silver *grosso* of about 1200 given on p. 432, which was adopted as the type for this later gold coinage, with John the Baptist, the patron saint of Florence, and the Florentine lily (river-flag), called by Dante *il maladetto fiore.*

17. Said to be the only coin-portrait (German ?) of Frederick Barbarossa. It is incredibly barbarous and grotesque—like a very ugly, beardless boy.

18. Pisan coin with name of Henry VII—therefore the date is 1312–13. See No. 15.

19. A very conventional portrait of Henry VII.

PART V

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

1190–1313

(*See Genealogy of Hohenstaufer, p.* 383)

(1) Henry VI

IT will be remembered that the year before Frederick Barbarossa was drowned in the Salef his son Henry became, through his wife Constance, the successor of William the Good of Sicily, whose marriage with Joan of England had proved childless. Many Sicilians however refused to accept the German overlord whom the English archbishop Of a Mill had foisted on them. Of a Mill's political rival, Aiello of Salerno, who had for years acted as the late king's Secretary of State (*protonotario*), instigated a rising in favour of Tancred, Count of Lecce, bastard son of Duke Roger, a son of King Roger, and caused him to be crowned king; and Pope Clement III sent his blessing. Forthwith Henry the Cruel—for this title his violent and ruthless nature earned him —assembled an army, vowing vengeance; but the tidings of his father's death in the East and the insurrection of Henry the Lion in Germany compelled him to recross the Alps. He soon suppressed the rival claimant to the German crown and was ere long in Rome, where, having won the favour of the Roman people by a very dastardly act,[1] he was able to compel the Pope (Celestine III) to crown him as Emperor (1191). He then marched south to subjugate the Two Sicilies, and with

[1] Namely, by handing over to their vengeance the town and stronghold of Tusculum—which, it must be confessed, had long been a nest of 'Tusculan Counts' and notorious for such Popes as John XII, besides being a grievous thorn in the side of republican Rome. It was now utterly destroyed. Thus disappeared the town of the son of Ulysses, the home of Cato, and the scene of Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*.

the help of ships from Pisa (that 'shame of Italy,' as Dante calls the city) beleaguered Naples—at this time almost a free city. But Norman ships drove the Pisans away, and Henry, with an army decimated by disease, returned to Germany.[1] Hereupon the cause of Tancred gained strength in the south of Italy. The Salernitans threw off their allegiance to the German king and gave up the Empress Constance, residing at that time in their city, to Tancred, who was chivalrous enough to set her at liberty—an act which makes appear all the more hideous the ingratitude and inhumanity of Henry; for when Tancred died in 1193, and his little son William was proclaimed King of the Sicilies under the regency of the widow-mother Sibilla, Henry came marching south again and, having captured Sibilla and her child, sent them with other prisoners to Germany and caused them to be blinded.

He was now master of the Sicilies as well as overlord of Northern Italy, where by a judicious combination of concession and severity he held the republics in curb. Over Tuscany he set his brother Philip, and other German dukes over Umbria and Romagna. With the Papacy and Rome he did not attempt to meddle much. As usual, there were conflicts going on in the city between the people and the nobility. Just at this time an oligarchy with a *Podestà* at its head was in power—soon to be supplanted by a republican Senate and a Prefect. To Henry it was fairly indifferent which party prevailed, for both kept the Pope in order.

The Empress Constance, who was a gentle and pious, and now an elderly, woman, doubtless felt keenly the barbarities committed by her German spouse. She had retired to the little town of Jesi, not far from Ancona, and here in December 1194 she gave birth to a son—the future Emperor Frederick II.

[1] It was in 1193–94 that Richard Coeur-de-Lion was captured by Leopold of Austria and handed over to Henry VI. German historians assert that the capture was justified by the fact that Richard came to Germany for the purpose of aiding Henry the Lion in his rebellions; and they extol the magnanimity of Henry in releasing the English king instead of giving him over to the vengeful Philippe Auguste—but they forget to mention the amount of ransom that the German monarch pocketed.

The child was elected King of the Romans by the German nobles assembled at Aachen in 1196, on which occasion Henry extracted from the electors the recognition of the absolute hereditary right of his descendants, whether in the male or the female line, to the German crown. Shortly after this he was recalled to South Italy by renewed insurrections, which he suppressed by the most barbarous inhumanities. Encouraged by his success, he began to form plans for the conquest of Dalmatia, which he claimed as an integral part of the Norman dominions, and even for the overthrow of Constantinople and the annexation of the Eastern Empire—a project that was realized not much later, but not by him; for he died at Messina in 1197, aged only thirty-two years.

(2) Frederick II and Pope Innocent III

According to the promise made by the electors the infant son of Henry ought to have succeeded, and for a time did succeed, under the regency of his mother, to the kingship of Germany and Italy, including the so-called Two Sicilies; and as King of the Romans he was already Emperor-designate. But in Germany Henry's brother and a rival seized power and were both crowned king. And ere the child was four years old his mother Constance died, leaving him under the guardianship of the Pope, whom she appointed the regent of the Sicilies. What right she had to do this may well be asked—as we have already asked by what right Matilda demised the duchy of Tuscany to the Church—but such an act need not surprise us in the case of a woman who had been compelled to renounce the life of a *religieuse*, if not of a nun, in order to contract a by no means happy marriage. Moreover, however illegal the act, it was accepted and thus became a fact of historical import. Nor is it easy to feel certain that the result did not justify the deed.

The Pope who thus became nominally the regent of the Two Sicilies—for this was of course the only realm to which Constance, as heiress of the Norman kings, had any claim—was Innocent III, the son of a Lombard Count of Segni and of

a Roman mother. At the age of thirty-seven he ascended the papal throne, some three months after the death of Henry VI. He was of all Roman pontiffs perhaps the ablest, and certainly the most masterful and ambitious; and he finally succeeded in realizing for a time his dreams of a papal empire and imposing his overlordship on all the monarchs [1] of Europe, the kingdoms of which he treated as fiefs of the Papacy. 'No such spectacle,' says a modern writer, 'had been seen since the time of Charlemagne; none such was to be seen again till the coming of Napoleon.' Nor were his triumphs limited to the kingdoms of the West; he held also the East in fee; for when (in 1202–4) Constantinople was captured and shamefully sacked [2] by the French would-be Crusaders and the Venetians, although at first he professed to be scandalized, he soon consoled himself by the fact that the supremacy of the Roman pontiff was acknowledged by the new Latin dynasty of Byzantine Emperors—the first of whom received the imperial purple from the hands of the legate of Innocent and the third was crowned and invested in St. Peter's at Rome by Innocent's successor, Honorius. It was indeed no empty boast that was contained in the words attributed to Innocent, that an Emperor was but a moon that borrowed radiance from the sun of the Papacy.[3]

[1] King John of England among them. Once the defiant excommunicated foe of Innocent, John ended by grovelling at the feet of Pandulf, the papal legate, when he landed at Dover, and received back from his hands his crown as a vassal of the Papacy.

[2] See 'Note on Byzantine Emperors,' p. 308. The so-called fourth Crusade (of which a picturesque account will be found in Gibbon, chs. lx-lxi) is only slightly connected with Italian history, through Venice and Doge Dandolo and the horses of St. Mark's. Innocent had preached a Crusade, and a great number of French and Flemings assembled in North Italy and hired Venetian ships; but being unable to pay, they were persuaded by the Venetians to help them to capture Zara, in Dalmatia, formerly Venetian domain. Zara was taken. The Venetians then persuaded the Crusaders to attack Constantinople and reseat on the throne the expelled Emperor—the usurper having shown favour to the Pisans, the great rivals of Venice in the East. The Emperor was restored; but quarrels arose and the Crusaders and Venetians again stormed Constantinople and sacked it in the most barbarous fashion, and placed Baldwin of Flanders on the imperial throne—the first of six Latin Emperors of the East.

[3] A simile used also by Dante at the end of his *De Monarchia*, although in his poem (*Purg.* xvi) he more justly speaks of two suns.

Another of Innocent's triumphs was won by a still more shameful Crusade and by means even more blood-curdling than the sack of Constantinople. The story of the annihilation of the Albigenses and the devastation of a great part of the south of France, if told worthily, would occupy much space; but it is only indirectly connected with our main subject and what brief remarks I can afford to make upon it are relegated to a subsequent chapter, in order that they should not here interrupt the narrative.

In one case Innocent failed. Not only Rome—where people and nobles were as usual at strife—but also many cities of Northern and Central Italy were in a state of more or less open rebellion against German domination. This discontent Innocent fomented and captained, dreaming to substitute his own suzerainty in place of the Empire. But here he was deceived. Emperors and kings might receive their crowns from the successor of St. Peter, but cities which had so hardly won their liberties were not going to exchange servitude to a German Emperor for servitude to a Roman Pope. The Guelf League, formed (1197) by the cities of Tuscany, refused to become the tool of an ambitious pontiff, however loudly he might assert his hatred of the common foe and repeat his favourite formula: 'Away with the detestable German race!'

Nor did the republics mistrust Innocent without good cause, as was soon proved when in Germany things took such a turn as to make him dissimulate his detestation. The minority of Frederick had revived the old Welf and Waibling feuds and two rival claimants had been crowned—the one at Aachen, the other at Mainz—Otto of Brunswick, son of the rebellious Henry the Lion and nephew of Richard Coeur-de-Lion, and Philip, son of Barbarossa and brother of the late Emperor. For ten years (1198–1208) the country was rent by civil war. Finally Philip was assassinated and Otto, proclaimed sole German king by the electors assembled at Frankfurt, courted the favour of Innocent by promising him the suzerainty of the Matilda domains and other territories in North Italy. The attempt succeeded and in 1208 Otto was crowned by the Pope

at Rome.[1] But the Romans, already hostile to Innocent's vast ambitions, were incensed at his duplicity and the bestowal of the imperial dignity on a foreign prince without their assent. Serious tumults took place when Otto attempted to pass from the Vatican across the Tiber and a thousand of his Germans were slain. In fierce anger he withdrew northwards, reoccupied the Matilda domains, and set his *Podestà* in the cities which he had promised to cede to the Papacy. Nor did this suffice to appease his resentment. He returned with a strong force and invaded territories of the Church and the realm of Frederick. Hereupon Innocent excommunicated him, and, as was so often the case, a weird success attended the act of the masterful pontiff. The thunderbolt seemed to wither the powers of Otto. He retreated to Germany, and ere long, after suffering a crushing defeat (1214) in a quarrel with Philippe Auguste of France, he was deposed by his nobles.[2]

(3) Frederick II, German King and Emperor

The German nobles had ere this (in 1212) invited the young Frederick to cross the Alps. This he did, and in 1215 he was crowned at Aachen as German king. As an infant he had been proclaimed, also at Aachen, King of the Romans, and now the title (which involved that of Emperor-designate) was solemnly confirmed by a great Council held at the Lateran, where more than 1500 prelates and many nobles were present. But although he was thus acknowledged to have succeeded to Otto's dignities he was not invited by Innocent to be crowned Emperor. The wily and ambitious pontiff evidently deemed it safer to defer this ceremony—perhaps on the ground that Otto still lived.

On his journey from Palermo to Germany Frederick had visited Rome and Pope Innocent, whom he then saw for the

[1] This seems rather inconsistent with his feelings about the detestable German race and imperial moonshine; but the bribe was big, and Innocent was very anxious that in any case the young Frederick should remain his feudatory and not become Emperor.

[2] In his struggles against his nobles and France he was supported largely by King John of England, and another result of this defeat at Bouvines was our Magna Carta.

first time. The generous and impulsive youth, not more than eighteen years of age, seems to have been most effusive towards his former guardian, expressing his deep gratitude by confirming the Pope's title to the territories claimed by the Church, by promising to join a Crusade, and even, it is said, by vowing to cede his southern kingdoms as a fief to the Papacy under the rule of his (still infant) son Henry, as soon as he should receive the imperial crown. Luckily, this last promise was never fulfilled. Even before the death of Innocent, which took place in 1216, Frederick had repented and recanted, and ere long he was to prove as fiercely adverse to the Papacy as Otto had been. Nor was Frederick alone in this rapid change of front. A general movement had begun which was destined finally to overthrow the whole fabric of the temporal power of the Popes, and first to fall in sudden collapse was Innocent's Babel-tower of papal supremacy, founded as it was on superstitious reverence for an antiquated form from which moral greatness had long ago departed.

How the Church was for a time to regain some of her ancient moral grandeur and moral influence—not through Popes and cardinals, but through the revival in humbler hearts of the spirit of Christian love and unworldliness, as practised by St. Francis and professed, if not practised, by Domenic—we shall see.

In 1220 Frederick determined to revisit his southern dominions, leaving Germany under the viceroyalty of his son Henry—a lad of about ten—whom he caused to be crowned King of the Romans at Frankfurt. Henceforth, during thirty years, his life was associated almost exclusively with Sicily and Italy. In Northern Italy his authority was to a great extent nominal, for many of the cities, having become still more powerful by the Guelf League and the vast increase of trade, enjoyed complete liberty, except when, from time to time, they were overawed by the presence of imperial troops. Moreover his Northern Italian domains had little attraction for him; it was the south, Sicily and Apulia especially, that he regarded as his home and his true kingdom. And he had other reasons for

his return. During his absence in the north troubles had arisen in Sicily. His Moslem soldiery had proved overbearing and the Christians were indignant. He felt it necessary to put things in order—and he did this effectually on his arrival by removing all Saracen troops from Sicily and forming a settlement of them in Nocera (near Pompeii), which henceforth was known as Nocera dei Pagani and proved for him an invaluable *point d'appui.*

Innocent had been succeeded in 1218 by Honorius III, who was at first hostile; but when Frederick arrived at Rome this mild-tempered Pope was persuaded by lavish concessions and promises about Crusades and other matters to crown him as Emperor—a ceremony facilitated by the fact that the deposed Otto had lately died. The coronation of Frederick and his queen, Constance of Aragon, took place in 1220. Two years later—the year of the terrible earthquake which on Christmas Day caused the death of many thousands in North Italy—Frederick's queen died, and the Pope, ever intent on Crusades, persuaded him to marry Iolanthe de Brienne, sister of the French titular King of Jerusalem (afterwards Emperor at Constantinople). Nevertheless Frederick showed no great desire to keep his promise and distinguish himself as a Crusader. Although, curiously enough, he proved later a zealous and cruel persecutor of heretics, he had not only toleration but admiration for infidels; indeed he was probably, to say the least, as good a Moslem as he was a Christian. So years passed, and Honorius died (1226) and the promise was still unfulfilled. But the next Pope, Gregory IX, though over eighty years of age, showed such determination that Frederick felt compelled to yield, and, having collected a large band of Crusaders—mostly Germans—set sail from Brindisi. A severe epidemic however broke out among his followers, who had suffered intensely from the Apulian dog-days, and he hastily ordered the fleet to be put about and the armament to be disembarked at Otranto.

Thereupon the fiery old Pope Gregory excommunicated him and published an Encyclical branding him as a traitor and

46. CASTEL DEL MONTE
Apulian Castle of Frederick II

coward. The no less fiery young Emperor responded with a courage and a candour which, as Villari says, would have done credit to Luther himself. His famous Manifest was the first really important and formal protest of the highest civil power against the usurpations of the Church and that Papal Supremacy which Innocent had built up so successfully. 'It was addressed to all the Princes and Peoples of the Empire, reminding them of the fate of the unlucky Count of Toulouse and of King John of England, and it drew with pitiless hand a vivid picture of the demoralization of the Church and the worldly ambitions of the Popes. The Emperor of Christendom declared himself in sympathy with the views of heretics in regard to the unapostolic character of the Papacy.' (Gregorovius.) The Manifest was read in public on the Roman Capitol amid great enthusiasm. A tumult arose and Gregory fled to Viterbo and then to Perugia, whence he launched excommunication against his adversaries.

It may at first somewhat surprise us to hear that under these circumstances Frederick decided voluntarily to undertake a Crusade—this time in all seriousness—but reflexion will make us realize that it was something of a master-stroke. He wished to show the world that Emperors and Crusaders were wholly indifferent to futile thunderbolts, and to prove that the Pope cared less for the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre than for his own petty vengeance. Still under ban and stigmatized by the clerics as a 'pirate, not a Crusader,' he reached Jerusalem. Here, no priest daring to perform the ceremony, he lifted with his own hand the crown from the altar of the Holy Sepulchre and set it on his head—an act which by force of contrast recalls that *gran capitano* of the first Crusade who refused to be crowned in the city where the King of Kings had worn a crown of thorns.[1]

[1] See p. 357. Frederick did not fight his way to Jerusalem. Before leaving Italy he had by clever diplomacy secured that the city should be handed over to him by the Sultan of Egypt, whom he promised to help against his rival, the Sultan of Damascus. The assumption of the crown by Frederick violated the nominal rights of his father-in-law, Jean de Brienne, who was made Eastern Emperor in 1228 and joined the Pope's motley brigade against Frederick.

Meanwhile in Italy Pope Gregory, still in exile at Perugia, had proclaimed a Holy War against the absent and excommunicated Emperor, and when Frederick landed in Apulia (1229) his Crusaders, many of whom were Moslems, were confronted by a motley force arrayed under the banner of the Papacy. But the Saracen soldiers of the Cross soon put to flight the soldiery of the Cross Keys, and the Pope was glad to make peace and graciously liberated Frederick from ban.[1] He then turned his mercenaries against humbler, but not less dangerous, adversaries—the Patarini and other heretics, who of late had been zealously disseminating their pernicious doctrines in North Italy and elsewhere; and strangely enough we find Frederick joining in this pitiable persecution. Gregory IX has the unenviable renown of having first introduced the dread tribunal of the Inquisition into Rome and of having burnt many condemned heretics—probably in the *piazza* of S. Maria Maggiore—to make a Roman holiday. In passing we may note the strange fact that the Roman mob, which for political reasons was for ever expelling and recalling Popes, was apparently in full sympathy with the Popes in regard to such inhumanities perpetrated in the name of religion. But after glutting their eyes on these *autos-de-fé* the mobile mob suddenly turned against their benefactor and again chased him out of Rome.

The years 1230–35 were momentous for Rome. Twice she made a desperate attempt to rid herself, so to speak, of the Old Man of the papal See; but on both occasions Frederick—compelled by political reasons, especially by his son's treasonable intrigues—listened to the pitiable appeals of the exiled Pope, who was now calling on Christendom to wage a Holy War against the Romans just as shortly before he had proclaimed a Crusade against Frederick himself. Had Rome at this crisis gained political freedom and put herself at the head of a Roman

[1] Gregory had been recalled to Rome by the citizens, terrified by a great inundation of the Tiber, which is said to have drowned thousands and to have broken down the Pons Aemilius (Senatorum). Of this bridge, still more damaged by the inundation of 1598, the relics form the well-known Ponte Rotto.

Confederation the later fortunes of Italy would have been very different from what they were—whether to her advantage and that of humanity, who can tell? But the struggle ended in favour of the Papacy in spite of the heroic efforts of the Romans. Their citizen army under the command of Senators followed their red and golden banner, inscribed with the proud S.P.Q.R. of the ancient Republic, and harried the towns of Tuscany and Latium, which the fugitive Pope was endeavouring to fortify and form into an anti-Roman Confederation. Then, on the mediation of Frederick, they allowed Gregory to return. But they soon repented—or, to use the simile of the old papal chronicler, seven worse devils entered into them—and, driven to fury by the thought of the free northern republics and their own servitude, they once more rose and demanded liberty. Their Senator Lucas Sorelli proclaimed Lower Tuscany and the Campagna to be domains of the Roman Republic. Pope Gregory fled and laid Rome under interdict. The Romans retaliated by plundering the Lateran. Finally, in response to his loud appeals auxiliaries from far and near came to the Pope's succour, and Frederick again lent his aid. A fierce battle took place near Viterbo. The Romans were defeated and chased back to their city; and ere long they were forced to renounce the hope of liberty and to accept papal overlordship,[1] under the condition of a nominal municipal autonomy on the one side, and on the other the immunity of the clerics from taxes and the operation of the civil law.

Frederick's son Henry, who since the year 1220 had acted as viceroy in Germany, now set up the standard of revolt, intrigued with the Lombard cities and the Pope, and proclaimed himself king. Frederick, after foiling his son's negotiations by sending help to the Pope, hastened across the Alps and succeeded in overpowering and capturing the rebel, who was sent (1235) to Apulia and lingered out the rest of his life in prison—a fate that, as we shall see, befell another of Frederick's sons.

[1] Pope Gregory, however, declined to return to Rome—that 'lair of roaring wild beasts.' He remained two years longer in exile, and in 1237 made a triumphal entry, while Frederick was engaged in battling with the Lombard cities.

In the place of Henry, as viceroy in Germany, Frederick elected his second son, Conrad. He then turned his attention to the Guelf Lombard cities, which had become more and more wealthy, independent, and rebellious, even to the point of blocking Alpine passes, and had engaged in ever fiercer conflict with the cities that favoured the imperial cause. This cause had however recently gained greatly in power under the leadership of a monk's son, that 'Son of the Devil,' as he was popularly called, the 'black-haired Ezzelino,' whom Ariosto has called a child of hell and Dante has put in the infernal river of blood together with Alexander and Dionysius. Ezzelino had already made himself master of several towns, and when Frederick came and captured Vincenza it was given over to this *condottiere*, who shortly afterwards took Padua and Mantua and thus became the tyrant, or viceroy, of a considerable domain. Milan headed the resistance of the remaining Guelf cities, but at Cortenova they suffered a rout as terrible as that of Legnano and Frederick entered Cremona in triumph, bringing with him the Milanese *Carroccio*, drawn, it is said, by a white elephant and bearing strapped to its mast the Milanese *Podestà*, Tiepolo, son of the Doge of Venice. Broken remnants of the car Frederick sent to Rome, to be exhibited and preserved in the Capitol.

All this naturally caused Pope Gregory deep displeasure. He assembled a Lateran Council and fulminated excommunication. A reply was sent by Pier delle Vigne, that trusty secretary of the Emperor who held both keys of Frederick's heart.[1] Frederick proposed to submit himself to a general Council. The Pope convoked a Council, but it was a purely clerical Council and was to be held at Rome. This was not at all what Frederick meant, and when (1241) a multitude—a rabble, *turba*, as Frederick called them—of cardinals and

[1] Dante, *Inf.* xiii, 58. Later he was accused (wrongly, he tells Dante) of revealing State secrets and was imprisoned and perhaps blinded by Frederick's order; whereupon he killed himself. In Dante's *Inferno* his spirit inhabits the bleeding tree (in the Wood of the Suicides) from which Virgil bids his brother-poet break off a twig in order to make it utter its story 'in blood and words.'

bishops and other clerics embarked for Rome at Genoa it was decided that Pisan and imperial vessels should attack them. The strange naval encounter took place near the isle of Monte Cristo. The convoy of Genoese galleys was routed and the captured clerics taken in triumph to Naples.

Meanwhile Frederick had marched southwards, and was contemplating an attack on Rome when news reached his camp at Grottaferrata (near the Alban Lake) that his old adversary Pope Gregory, who had nearly reached his hundredth year,[1] was dead. Many of the prelates were still in Frederick's hands, and the Ten Cardinals that were in Rome, after being for two months closely imprisoned by the Senator Rubeus—a despotic individual who at that time was paramount in the city—at last gained their release from the cruel confinement (in which one of them had died) by electing a weakly old man, Celestine IV. He survived his election only eighteen days. Then followed a papal interregnum of nearly two years, during which all the cardinals dispersed, taking refuge in various country strongholds. At last, after many admonitions and threats from Frederick, who continued to devastate the Campagna, though he did not venture to attack Rome, the electors met at Anagni.

Frederick had released some of the captured prelates in order to secure their support at the papal election, and Cardinal Fieschi of Genoa, who had long enjoyed his friendship, was chosen. But Frederick only lost a friend by this election, for, as he himself exclaimed, 'no Pope was ever a Ghibelline.' Indeed Innocent IV proved as determined an opponent as ever Gregory had been. He began by refusing to remove the ban from the Emperor because he would not evacuate certain fortresses, and in 1245 he sailed off to Genoa and made his way to Lyon, in France,[2] where he assembled a Council and proclaimed Frederick's deposition.

A battle of Titans then took place, in which Encyclicals

[1] *Fere centenarius*, says the English chronicler Matthew Paris. He was over eighty when consecrated in 1227.

[2] He proposed himself to the courts of Aragon, France, and England, but was 'politely begged to spare them the honour of a visit' (Gregorovius).

and Manifests were hurled like rocks and thunderbolts, while Europe looked on in silent awe. The contest seemed at the time to have no very decided result. Frederick's attack on the greed and arrogance and vices of the Papacy and clergy was hailed with enthusiasm by the greater part of Christendom, but Innocent also found wide support when he claimed that 'to the Head of the Church had been given the two swords of power, spiritual and temporal, and that of his own will he could lend one to the Emperor.' Europe had not yet arrived at that discernment between the realms of religion and civil power for which in his *Monarchia* and in his poem [1] Dante so vigorously contends. But doubtless this great conflict had far-reaching, if not easily perceptible, effects, and even at the time it caused on the one side dangerous risings and the proclamation of a rival Emperor, and on the other a very strong revival of anti-papal feeling, of which the Ghibelline party in North Italy took advantage in order to suffocate the young republics. The bloody Ezzelino, now Frederick's son-in-law, supported by Frederick's illegitimate son Enzio (or Enzo), subjugated many of the towns of Lombardy, Emilia, and Venetia, and endeavoured to convert them into Signories (a fate that ere long was to fall on most of the Italian republics), or rather perhaps to found one great Signoria of many cities.

For a time Frederick remained in his southern dominions, in constant conflict with allies of the Pope, who continued to preach crusades against the excommunicated monarch and found no methods too shameful if only by stirring up fanaticism against the 'infidel foe of the Faith' and inciting revolt against this 'second Nero' he could annihilate the 'viper brood' of the Hohenstaufen princes. Mendicant friars, suborned by papal gold, instigated the Sicilian barons to murder the Emperor.[2] The plot was however fortunately discovered, and not long afterwards (1247) Frederick made his way to North Italy in order to join his son Enzio in the campaign

[1] *Soleva Roma . . . Duo Soli aver . . . L'un l'altro ha spento, ed è giunta la spada Col pasturale* (*Purg.* xvi).

[2] Letters of Innocent are extant in which he addresses the would-be assassins as 'glorious sons of the Church.

47. Tomb of Frederick II
Palermo

against the republican cities. Here he suffered a disastrous reverse, for during his siege of Parma, which made a heroic resistance, the besieged took advantage of his absence on a hunting expedition to venture a sally and succeeded in destroying his camp and slaying and capturing thousands of his men, so that, in almost as desperate state as was Frederick Barbarossa after Legnano, with great difficulty he reassembled his forces in Cremona, intending to renew the war. But another blow fell on him. His son Enzio was captured by the Bolognese, and the unfortunate youth spent all the rest of his life, nigh twenty-three years, as a prisoner.[1]

As was the case also with the great Theoderic, the last years of Frederick were overcast not only by disaster but by dark suspicions and by acts cruel and unjust. The fate of his secretary and counsellor Pier delle Vigne of Capua, who had long enjoyed his confidence, has been already related. It seems to have been at Cremona that Frederick had him arrested, and perhaps blinded, and at Pisa that Pier ended his life by suicide. In the same year Frederick, broken down by calamities, withdrew to his well-loved Apulia, and a few months later (1250) he died, after a short illness, in one of his castles—Castel Fiorentino, near Lucera—some say surrounded by his faithful Saracens, according to others, whom Gregorovius follows, 'clothed in the habit of a Cistercian monk and absolved by his true friend the Archbishop of Palermo.'

Laetentur caeli et exsultet terra, wrote Innocent, the Chief Pastor of the Christian Church, to the Sicilian people when he heard of the death of their king—with which brutality we may contrast the words of that king when he learnt the death of *his* great opponent, Pope Gregory IX: *de morte ejus multa compassione conducimur, et licet digno contra eum odio moveremur.*[2]

[1] Probably in the (now much restored) Palazzo del Rè Enzio at Bologna. His captivity is said to have been solaced by the affection of the beautiful Lucia Viadagola, from whom the Bentivogli claim descent.

[2] And yet Pope Gregory had often called him a 'blasphemous beast' and worse. But Frederick, infidel as he was, had enough Christian and knightly sentiment to agree with the noble words of Odysseus: 'It is an unholy act

Innocent's one object in life seems to have been to crush the 'viper brood' of the Hohenstaufen dynasty. He at once hastened from Lyon to Italy, which he had not visited for six years, fulminating excommunications and preaching crusades against the youthful Conrad, Frederick's son, the German king. Conrad came down to the south to assert his rights; but he soon died (1254), leaving an infant son, Conradin—the last legitimate scion of the imperial house of the Hohenstaufer.[1]

(4) Manfred and Charles of Anjou

An illegitimate son of Frederick, Manfred, Prince of Taranto, had been appointed by his father's will the viceroy of South Italy under the suzerainty of his half-brother Conrad. On Conrad's death Manfred, who was a youth of twenty-two, at first loyally supported the infant heir, Conradin, and appealed to Innocent to do the same. But Innocent demanded full and

to triumph over the dead.' The influence of Frederick's Sicilian court on literature will be touched upon later. I shall not attempt here to give what journalists call an 'appreciation' of his character. His was one of those richly composite natures which defy analysis. His best qualities came from his Norman mother. A huge *Life* has been published by M. Bréholles (at the cost of the Duc de Lugnes). He tries to prove that Frederick regarded himself as a kind of Messiah; but the Biblical expressions used by Frederick (*e.g.* when he called his birthplace 'Bethlehem' and told Pier delle Vigne to 'feed his sheep') may be explained by the usage of the age. Undoubtedly he was a free-thinker, a cosmopolitan in religion, with a strong *penchant* for Oriental forms of thought and Oriental habits, such as concubinage; and there is no reason to doubt that he used to speak of Moses, Christ, and Mohammed as three deceived deceivers whose religion he could better; and we cannot be surprised that Dante in the *Inferno* condemns him to a fiery tomb as a heresiarch. But what is surprising is that Frederick was himself strictly Catholic and a zealous persecutor of unorthodoxy, and, if Dante does not calumniate him, invented a most cruel form of torture and death for such heretics (see *Inf.* xxii, 66). It reminds one of Poggio's story of the brigand who had many unpardoned murders on his conscience, but came at the risk of his life into a town to obtain absolution for having drunk a few drops of milk in Lent.

[1] See table, p. 383. Henry, Frederick's son by Isabella of England, had been made viceroy of Sicily. He died about the same time as his father. Pope Innocent offered (!) the crown of Sicily to Charles of Anjou and Richard of Cornwall, both of whom refused it. He then persuaded Henry III of England to let his little son, Edmund of Lancaster, aged eight, assume the title. But Henry showed no inclination to respond when called upon by Popes to assert his son's claim by force and to conquer Sicily.

open submission to papal overlordship, and Manfred preferred open hostility, and by the help of his faithful Saracens he succeeded in routing the Pope's mercenaries at Foggia. Five days later Pope Innocent died at Naples.

The new Pope, Alexander IV (1254–61), was at first much hampered by the state of things in Rome, where under a Bolognese *Podestà* named Brancaleone a republican government fully constituted with the popular councils and guilds (*Arti*) of the northern Communes held sway for a season and favoured Manfred as the adversary of the Papacy. So it came to pass that in spite of various papal excommunications—to which Christendom was becoming alarmingly indifferent—Manfred's cause so prospered that, taking perhaps advantage of a false rumour of Conradin's death and in any case considering it better to take the reins out of the hands of a feeble child whose authority even in Germany was challenged by rival claimants (such as Richard of Cornwall and Alfonso of Castile), he followed King Roger's example and assumed the royal crown in the cathedral of Palermo (1258).

Manfred now had against him not only the Pope and the Guelfs but the legitimist Ghibellines, the supporters of Conradin. In the south he held his own by the aid of his German troops and his faithful Saracens; but this did not increase his popularity, and he deepened the resentment by importing from Africa fresh contingents of Moslem mercenaries.

Meanwhile in the north the Ghibelline cause, which—although the great feud often lent itself to private faction—was generally the cause of feudalism and foreign domination as against republican liberty, had received a serious blow by the overthrow of Ezzelino. For twenty years his had been a name of terror in North Italy. He lorded it as despot, though nominally a feudatory of the Empire, over all the cities between Lago di Garda and the Venetian lagunes. But the republican spirit was not to be extinguished. With the aid of the Guelf communes the enslaved cities freed themselves, and Ezzelino was thrown into prison, where (1259) he perished, it is said, by tearing the bandages from his wounds.

Thus the popular cause was for a time triumphant in the north, while in Tuscany the Florentine Guelfs succeeded in expelling the Uberti and their Ghibelline supporters. This triumph however was short-lived, for (as we shall see later) the exiles collected an army and crushed their adversaries at Montaperti, near Siena, and Florence would have been sacked and razed to the ground but for the interposition of the great Ghibelline chief Farinata degli Uberti. In this battle, which, as Dante says, 'stained the Arbia red' with the blood of the Guelfs, Manfred's German cavalry took a conspicuous part. This established his authority also in Central Italy, and his Vicar, Guido Novello, for a time governed Florence.

But his fortunes were now to decline. Pope Alexander died in 1261, and the cardinals, after months of hesitation, chose the son of a shoemaker of Troyes who had risen to be Patriarch of Jerusalem. The election of this French Pope (Urban IV) soon had its results. Seeing that Henry III of England was too much occupied with his barons, he offered the crown of Sicily (already presented by Innocent to the little English prince) to Charles of Anjou, brother to Louis IX (St Louis) of France; and this offer was unfortunately accepted.

Charles, Count of Anjou and also, through his wife, of Provence, had distinguished himself together with his royal brother in the seventh Crusade and had lately been elected Senator by the Romans. His ambitious, adventurous, unscrupulous, and cruel character, and his extraordinary luck, found ample scope, as we shall see, in bringing disasters on Italy and Sicily. This he accomplished mainly by the aid of the Papacy. When the French Pope died (1265) a Provençal, a subject and admirer of Charles, was elected. This pontiff, Clement IV, found it easy to persuade Charles's brother, the French king, to allow a crusade to be preached in France against Manfred, and a large body of recruits was enlisted by means of the contributions of the pious and by papal indulgences. Manfred, on the other hand, assembled at Capua his German and Saracen land forces—who derided the advent of the French adventurer—while a fleet of Sicilian and Pisan ships

cruised along the coasts to prevent the invader effecting a landing.

The adventurous Charles however trusted to his luck. He sailed from Marseille with only a thousand horsemen. His armada of seventy small vessels was dispersed by the winds, but he ran the blockade with three and by means of a boat reached land safely near Ostia. He was received with enthusiasm by his Roman friends and given quarters in the convent of S. Paolo fuori le mura. Two days later the rest of his ships arrived, the tempest having scattered the enemy. He then made his formal entry into Rome (May 21, 1265—the month and year in which Dante was born). Here he had to wait eight months for his land army. Meantime, though often in great straits for want of money, he amused himself by acting the *rôle* of Senator, founding the University of Rome, and being invested and crowned as King of the Sicilies—a function performed by cardinals,[1] as Pope Clement was still at Perugia, not having yet ventured to come to Rome.

Had Manfred risked at this crisis the bold stroke of surprising Rome and capturing the French adventurer, the history of Italy might have been very different from what it is. His nobles however were not to be trusted, and while he hesitated the land army of Charles, augmented by Italian Guelfs (among them four hundred Florentine exiles), made its way to Rome. Manfred now took up a position near Benevento, and here Charles attacked him. The battle, long doubtful, was decided by the desertion of Manfred's barons; whereupon he dashed forward into the midst of the fray and was killed. Among the thousands of the slain his body was at last discovered, and the soldiers, honouring their gallant foe, raised above it a great cairn of stones; but the Archbishop of Cosenza, ordered by Pope Clement, dragged it forth and carried it, 'with candles quenched and inverted,' beyond the frontier of the kingdom, to the 'banks of the Verde'—perhaps the Liris—and there

[1] The first time anyone less than an Emperor or Pope was crowned in St. Peter's. On his arrival Charles had very coolly quartered himself in the Lateran, but he received a most indignant letter from the Pope and had to clear out.

cast it out to the winds and rain and birds and beasts of prey.[1] Charles wreaked his fury also on the young wife and four of the children of Manfred—all of whom spent the rest of their lives, some more than thirty years, in dungeons. One escaped —to become later Queen of Sicily—and to her, his *bella figlia, la buona Costanza,* Manfred sent greetings by Dante from the Mount of Purgatory.

The fall of Manfred of course produced a great revival of Guelf supremacy in the northern cities. Florence expelled Manfred's officials and the Guelf constitution was established on a firm basis.

(5) Conradin and Charles of Anjou

The cruel and tyrannical conduct of Charles soon aroused hatred and revolt, both in Sicily, where his intolerable extortions and his intention to make Naples the capital of his kingdom instead of Palermo made him specially unpopular, and also in the north, where the Ghibellines, led by Pisa and Siena, were once more gaining strength and beginning to look towards Germany—for the young German king, Conradin, now a lad of fourteen years, seemed to show a desire to try his fortunes against the French usurper.

It was a strange state of things and one which well illustrates the complexities of Italian history. Here we see half the inhabitants of Italy turning to a German youth for help while they groan under the lash of the French tyrant who has been imposed on them by the Pope, the supreme guardian of their moral and spiritual weal; we see the Pope abetting this foreign oppressor and at the same time craftily patronizing the cause of republican liberty in order to gain allies against the 'viper brood' of German princes; we see some of the

[1] See the wonderful passage (*Purg.* iii) in which Manfred himself relates all this to Dante, who met him, in spirit, in the Antipurgatory. The description of the young prince, 'fair-haired and handsome and of aspect gentle, save that a wound had cleft one of his eyebrows,' has always reminded me of that vision of Prince Edward which (in Shakespeare's *Richard III*) appeared to his murderer, Clarence: 'Then came wandering by A shadow like an angel, with bright hair Dabbled in blood. . . .'

so-called republics utterly false to the cause of true liberty merely for the sake of wreaking vengeance on political rivals, making alliance with the Papacy and at the Pope's bidding slavishly recognizing Charles of Anjou as their lord and master —even electing him as their *Podestà*, as Florence did, to her eternal disgrace.

In the year 1267 the brave young Conradin crossed the Alps. He was received enthusiastically by Pavia and Pisa and other Ghibelline cities. The feeble bolt of excommunication launched by Pope Clement from Viterbo had no effect, and by midsummer of 1268 the boy-king was in Rome, where, on the Capitol, he was acclaimed Emperor by the fickle mob. Impatient to meet his foe, he soon, perhaps too soon, led forth his troops. He found Charles not far from Tagliacozzo, in the vicinity of Lago di Fucino. At first fortune favoured him; but his troops betook themselves to pillage and were suddenly assailed and routed by a strong reserve of cavalry commanded by Charles himself and Valéry, constable of Champagne. With five hundred horsemen Conradin escaped and reached Rome; but he was timorously received, and with a few companions he decided to flee. They struck southwards, towards the Pomptine marshes, as once Caius Marius and Cicero had done. At Astura, then a small fishing village, he found a vessel and embarked, hoping to reach Pisa, but the owner of the neighbouring castle,[1] one of the Frangipani, gave chase and captured him and handed him over to his pursuers.

Charles had slaughtered most of his important prisoners—cutting off the hands and feet of many, and, as this proved too long and disagreeable a process, shutting up the rest in a wooden building and burning them to death. But he thought it politic to give Conradin a mock trial. Of the judges, appointed by Charles to pass the verdict that he wished, only one gave his voice for it; one, like Socrates, risked his life by

[1] Astura, where Cicero had a villa and first took refuge in his flight, is now an island of ruins amid malarious swamps. Walls of the Frangipani castle still exist, and a single tower. In the dim distance looms the Circeian Cape.

opposing it; the rest were silent. Then Charles, interpreting silence as consent, pronounced the sentence of death on the young king and twelve of his companions. The tidings was received by Conradin as he was playing chess with his relative and fellow-victim, Duke Frederick of Baden. On October 29, 1268, the pitiable execution took place at Naples, in the Piazza del Mercato, which in those days was open to the sea.[1] Conradin, who was but sixteen years of age, is said to have shown no terror, but to have embraced his companions and the executioner and to have laid his head on the block exclaiming: 'Ah, my mother, what sorrow I have caused thee!'

(6) Charles of Anjou and the Sicilian Vespers

A month later Pope Clement, who had never dared to return to Rome, died at Viterbo. He had given no sign of horror at the bloody and brutal deed perpetrated by Charles. Indeed he exulted at the extinction of the hated 'viper brood' of Hohenstaufen. But he had doubtless begun to realize that Charles was his master—that he had raised a fiend whom he could not exorcize. And how entirely Charles was master is shown by the fact that for nearly three years no Pope was elected, the Italian cardinals being paralysed by the insolence of the French prelates and officials. Nor was he content with being master of the Sicilies and in Rome and the greater part of Italy. He dreamt of a far greater realm. After persuading his brother to undertake a crusade against Tunis (where Louis died of the plague) he tried to establish and extend his rapacious dominion in those regions. Then he turned his thoughts to the East, and by betrothing his daughter to the son and heir of the exiled Latin Emperor of Byzantium, Baldwin II of Courtenay, who offered to cede him the province of Thessalonica when restored to his throne, he hoped to found a dynasty which should rule the combined Empire of the East and the West. But Baldwin, expelled by Michael Palaeologus, spent the rest of his existence in soliciting aid from the

[1] In the neighbouring church of S. Croce is a porphyry pillar that is said to have stood on the spot where Conradin was beheaded.

princes of Europe, and the dreamland castle of Charles melted into air.

In 1271 the cardinals at last ventured to meet at Viterbo in order to elect a Pope; but such tedious delays did the opposition of the French prelates cause that at last the people of Viterbo unroofed the building in which the electors were confined so as to hasten their decision. While all this was going on Charles, who had just returned from Tunis, appeared on the scene. There came also Guy de Montfort, who was now his viceroy in Tuscany. He was grandson of the terrible Simon de Montfort, exterminator of the Albigenses. His father (Earl Simon of Leicester) had been killed in the battle of Evesham, and his body had been despitefully treated.

Now with Charles from Tunis had come an English prince, a cousin of Guy's, Henry of Cornwall, nephew to Henry III of England, the great enemy of the Montforts. The sight of the young Henry so enraged Guy de Montfort that during the celebration of Mass in the cathedral of Viterbo he killed him at the high altar in the presence of Charles and the cardinals and dragged him out of the church by the hair. Guy fled; but Charles took no serious step to punish the deed of his viceroy —a fact that throws a lurid light on this reign of terror. Dante however has made compensation by condemning the murderer to the second deepest pool of the River of Blood.[1] Why he did not consign Charles to a similar fate instead of assigning him a pleasant glade in Antipurgatory is unexplainable, I think, except by the fact that the poet loved his grandson, Charles Martel (for whom see *Par.* viii, and table, p. 477).

The cardinals finally chose—evidently in protest against this murder and against Charles and his French officials—an Italian archdeacon in attendance on Prince Edward of England in Palestine. Gregory X, soon after he landed at Brindisi, gave manifest proofs of being a wise but determined antagonist of Charles, and when, in October of 1273, Rudolf of Habsburg

[1] Dante alludes to the fact that Henry's heart was sent to England in a golden vase and was 'reverenced on the bank of the Thames.' The vase is said to have been placed on the tomb of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey.

was elected as German king, or rather German Kaiser,[1] he gave his explicit approval—an act that naturally incensed Charles, for the new German 'Emperor' soon began to re-establish German influence in North Italy and Tuscany. Moreover, in opposition to Charles's policy of bloody reprisal, Gregory endeavoured to conciliate factions and feuds. He succeeded to some extent at Bologna and Milan, but failed entirely in the case of Florence, where Guelf predominance was now finally established, and where (as indeed in Rome and elsewhere) the Guelf, or republican, party by no means identified itself with papal interests.[2] Gregory also opposed Charles in favouring Michael Palaeologus and refusing to listen to the mendicant ex-Emperor Baldwin; and when, in 1275, he actually went so far as to meet Rudolf of Habsburg at Lausanne and promised to crown him Emperor open hostility was inevitable.

But early in 1276 Gregory X died at Arezzo (his tomb is in the Duomo). During the next eighteen months three Popes came on the scene and passed. Then, after a vacancy of six months, Nicholas III, of the Orsini family, was elected.[3] He is said to have tried to marry his niece to Charles and,

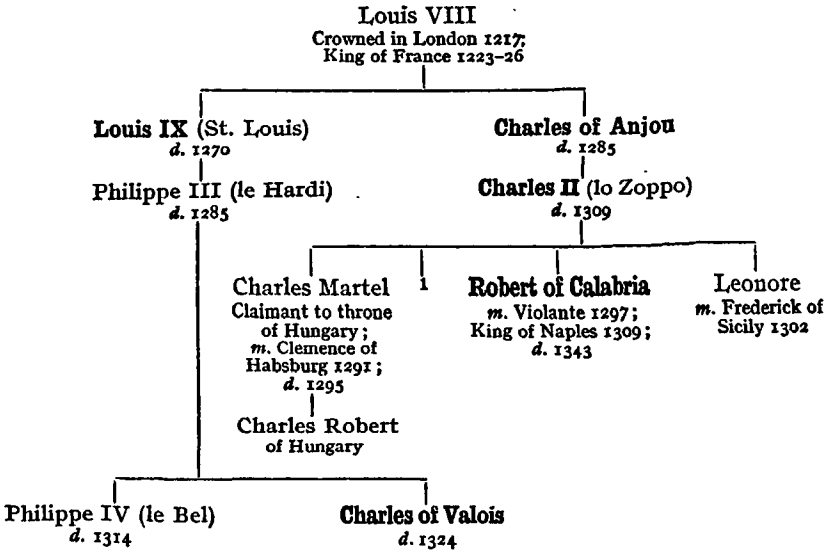
[1] He is called *Imperador* even by Dante (*Purg.* vii, 94); although never crowned by the Pope. In a retired glade of the Mount of Purgatory Rudolf sits sad and solitary, as 'one who had neglected to do his duty'—viz. to take a proper interest in Italy and be crowned at Rome. Not far off, in an amicable company, is our Henry III, 'the king of the simple life,' and Charles of Anjou singing hymns (through his 'masculine nose') out of the same hymn-book as his mortal foe, Peter of Aragon. See Fig. 48 and explanation.

[2] Florence, though Guelf, proved so recalcitrant to the Pope that he laid it under interdict, and being compelled by a flood to cross the Arno by a Florentine bridge, he only suspended the ban for a few hours—till he had passed through the city. The terms Guelf and Ghibelline had quite lost their original papal and imperial significations. Here we have Popes favouring the German Emperor and hostile to the Florentine Guelfs. The papal policy was, of course, never really on the side of republican liberty.

[3] Had he succeeded in his designs, says Gregorovius, he would have made his *nepotes* kings of Tuscany and Lombardy. '*Son of the She-bear* [*Orsa*], *so greedy to advance my cubs that on earth I pocketed wealth and here I pocketed myself*,' is how he describes himself to Dante, who puts him, as Simonist, in Malebolge, upside down in a hole with his feet alight. Hearing Dante speaking Italian, he exclaims, '*Art thou already here, Boniface!*' mistaking him for Pope Boniface VIII, who was destined (in 1303) to be thrust down head-foremost into the same hole and to be followed later by Clement V, who removed the seat of the Papacy to Avignon.

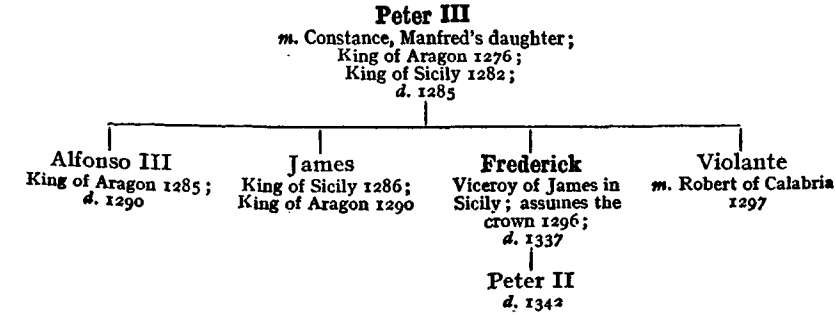
48. Charles of Anjou
Rome

1. ANGEVINS AND CHARLES OF VALOIS



[1] A second son became a cleric.

2. EARLY SPANISH KINGS OF SICILY



In 1410 Sicily becomes an appendage of the crown of Aragon. In 1442 Alfonso of Aragon dispossesses the Angevin René and establishes his court at Naples.

having been repulsed contemptuously, to have not only continued Gregory's anti-French policy, but to have incited the rebellion which terminated in the Vespers of Palermo.

In the north of Italy Rudolf's influence and that of the Ghibelline nobles now increased rapidly. In Milan the Visconti became masters; in Verona the Scaligeri; almost everywhere hatred of Charles and the French deepened, except in Florence, where the *Arti* found their trade favoured by his policy. The storm was gathering fast; but it was from the south that the fatal flash was to come.

The moment before Conradin laid his head on the block, it is said, he threw his glove amidst the crowd. This glove was taken to Peter, a Spanish prince who was married to Manfred's daughter, Constance, and who later (1276) became King of Aragon and Catalonia and had already conquered Valencia and Majorca from the Moors and had thus gained free access to Sicily. Incited by his wife, he listened to the appeals of the Sicilians, driven to despair by the tyranny of Charles and his French officials, and to the arguments of John of Procida, a learned physician, who after the battle of Tagliacozzo had fled to Spain and had for ten years urged Peter to lay claim, as heir of Manfred, to the crown of the Sicilies. And now Peter was watching his chance—which soon came.

Pope Nicholas having died in 1280, the cardinals again met at Viterbo, and Charles once more betook himself thither, determined this time to have a proper Pope; and the Frenchman who was elected (Martin IV) proved all that he desired and supported his tyranny vigorously until, a few years later, he died of a surfeit of Bolsena eels and Vernaccia wine, as related by Dante, who met his skeleton-spirit on the Mount of Purgatory doing penance for gluttony.

It was on Easter Tuesday in 1282, just when Charles, confiding in his papal ally, was again meditating the conquest of the Eastern Empire, that a spark—an insult offered by a French soldier to a Sicilian bride—caused a terrific explosion. All Palermo rose, 'shouting *Kill! kill!*' as Dante says, and almost every Frenchman in Sicily was slaughtered.

(7) From the Sicilian Vespers to the Peace of Caltabellotta

The history of Italy during this period (1282–1302) is dominated and obscured by the turmoil of the long and obstinate contest between the French Angevins and the Spanish Aragonese for the possession of Sicily. Although of course momentous for the political future of Italy, this struggle between her foreign usurpers is only indirectly connected with her true history. I shall therefore give merely a brief account of this struggle and then pass on to the state of things in Rome and other cities during the pontificate of the Prince of modern Pharisees, as Dante calls Pope Boniface VIII.

When the tragedy of the Vespers took place King Peter of Aragon was preparing an expedition, nominally against Tunis; but doubtless Sicily was his ulterior object. Having failed to capture Tunis, he turned his fleet northwards. In five days he was at Trapani, and five days later (September 4, 1282) at Palermo, where he was acclaimed King of Sicily. Charles, furious with indignation, sent across the Straits a large army commanded by his son, Charles the Lame (Carlo lo Zoppo). But the 'Cripple of Jerusalem,' as Dante calls him, was soon compelled to withdraw his forces from the island, and Peter's admiral, Loria, inflicted on the Angevin fleet two crushing defeats, first near Malta and then in the Bay of Naples, and succeeded in capturing lo Zoppo himself. In Calabria, too, the people rose against the French. Charles was obliged to withdraw northwards, and while awaiting reinforcements from France he died at Foggia (January 1285).

His youthful grandson, Charles Martel,[1] was proclaimed king in the place of his captive father; but some four years later, through the influence of our King Edward I, lo Zoppo was

[1] Heir also of the throne of Hungary, through his mother, Mary of Hungary. He married Clemence (the *bella Clemenza* of *Par.* ix, 1, unless this was his daughter), daughter of Rudolf of Habsburg, and died 1295, fourteen years before his father's decease. His brother Robert of Calabria succeeded to the Angevin throne of Naples. Charles Martel was a very dear friend of Dante's, who met him at Florence—and later in heaven (see *Par.* viii).

liberated and for the next twenty years was King of Naples and South Italy and claimant to the crown of Sicily, which rested on the head of a Spanish monarch. This Spanish monarch was, however, not Peter of Aragon and Sicily—for he had died in the same year as his great adversary, Charles of Anjou, and had been succeeded in Sicily by his son James (the Just). James and Charles II (the Lame) waged intermittent war with little result. In 1290 James became King of Aragon, on the death of his elder brother, Alfonso, and his younger brother, Frederick, became Spanish viceroy in Sicily.

Frederick however was not content with this title, and in 1296 had himself proclaimed King of Sicily. Between the two brothers there ensued a fierce conflict, fomented and embittered by the fiendish malice and ambition of Pope Boniface, who at last induced Constance, the pious widow of King Peter, to visit Rome with her elder son, King James, and to make a disgraceful compact with her younger son's arch-enemy, lo Zoppo, giving him her daughter Violante to wife. The fratricidal war was of course renewed with increased bitterness, and the old Spanish admiral Loria, who had faithlessly abandoned Frederick and had espoused the Angevin cause, defeated the Sicilian fleet with great loss. At last (in 1302), after Boniface had added to his sins the iniquity of inviting to Italy Charles of Valois (of whose ill-fated enterprise we shall soon hear more), the combatants, weary of strife, patched up, much to the disgust of Pope Boniface, the Peace of Caltabellotta, by which the kingship of Sicily was conceded to Frederick for his lifetime; but he bound himself to marry Leonore, the daughter of Charles II (lo Zoppo), under the condition that any eventual heir should receive Sardinia or Cyprus, but resign Sicily to the Angevins—a condition which, on his death in 1337, was not fulfilled because the Sicilians refused to become subjects of the French princes.[1]

[1] The Angevin Kings of Naples and South Italy came to an end in 1442, when *le bon roi* René was dispossessed by the Spanish Alfonso, who thus became King of the Two Sicilies. Caltabellotta is in West Sicily, not very far from the gigantic ruins of Selinus. The (Saracen) word means 'Castle of the Cork-oaks.'

(8) Rome from 1285 to 1303. Boniface VIII

In the same year (1285) in which Charles of Anjou and Peter of Aragon and Sicily died the French Pope Martin IV succumbed to his surfeit of eels and *vernaccia*. The pacific, although gouty, old cardinal who succeeded (Honorius IV) was brother to the Senator of Rome, Pandulf, of the illustrious house of the Savelli. The brothers—one from the Lateran, the other from the Capitol—exercised a beneficent influence and curbed for two years the fury of the rival factions of the Orsini and the Colonna, though both were so crippled by gout that the Senator had to be lifted into his curule chair and the Pope had to use a mechanical device for elevating the Host. After the decease of Honorius a vacancy of ten months was caused not only by the violence of the party factions but also by the ravages of the plague, which carried off six of the cardinals. At last was consecrated Nicholas IV, the Bishop of Palestrina (the Orsini stronghold) and formerly a friend of the Orsini Pope, Nicholas III ('son of the She-bear'). This was the signal for the outbreak of a still more violent conflict between the two great families of the Orsini and the Colonna, who called themselves respectively Guelfs and Ghibellines—names which signified little but that the bearers were mortal foes and rival competitors for cardinal hats and papal tiaras.

When this Pope died (1292) the battle between the cardinals was so obstinate that for two years no election took place—a state of things that enabled Charles the Lame to assume, as his father had done, a dominating position, as if he were actually the Head of the Church. Finally, the cardinals being assembled at Perugia and the deadlock seeming as hopeless as ever, it happened that somebody mentioned a certain hermit called Peter, who lived in a cave on Monte Morrone, in the Abruzzi (some fifty miles north-east of Rome), where he had founded a religious Order and had gained a reputation for visions and miracles.[1] A cardinal, perhaps half in joke, suggested solving

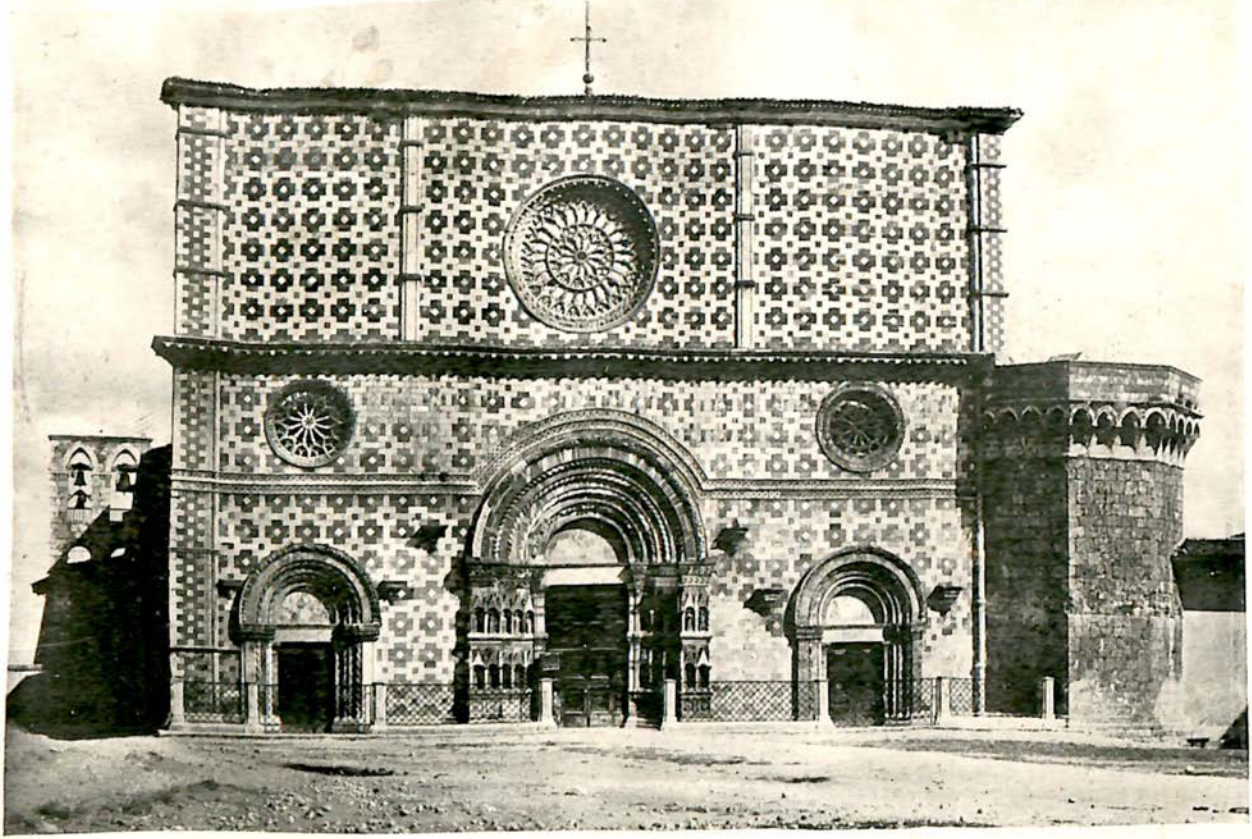
[1] When visiting Gregory X in Lyon to obtain sanction for his new Order he astonished that pontiff by hanging up his monk's cowl on a sunbeam. Frescos at Aquila depict his miracles.

difficulties by electing this hermit, and with sudden and unanimous impulse the assembly greeted the solution. Three bishops were commissioned to acquaint Peter of his election.

The simple-minded old monk (he was seventy-two years of age) was dumbfoundered and refused to entertain the idea. Then a great multitude of nobles and prelates and other people, led by King Charles and his son Charles Martel, made their way to the cave, and at last he allowed himself to be escorted thence—the king and the king's son leading the ass on which, clothed in his simple hermit's dress, he had mounted. In a church near Aquila—evidently S. Maria di Collemaggio (Fig. 49), which contains his tomb—he was consecrated, the church being filled and surrounded, it is said, by 200,000 persons.

Instead of allowing the new Pope (Celestine V) to proceed to Rome, King Charles took him off to his court at Naples, in order to use him for his own purposes. But he soon discovered that he was useless for these purposes, and ere four months had elapsed the poor old hermit, finding existence intolerable, abdicated; and it is said that he was encouraged to do so by angel voices that made themselves audible in his bedchamber through the ingenious contrivance or ventriloquistic accomplishments of a cardinal named Benedetto,[1] a scion of the knightly family of the Gaetani of Anagni (or, as Dante calls the town, Alagna). This crafty, arrogant, and audacious man had, it is said, already secured secret conferences with King Charles and had undertaken to support his policy by every means at the disposal of a Roman pontiff; and ten days after the resignation of Celestine (Christmas Eve, 1294) he was elected by the timorous cardinals, though many of them were apparently convinced of the truth of the reports which accused him of the most scandalous vices and of denying the immortality of the soul, the divinity of Christ, and even the existence of God. Ten days later, again, he made his entry into Rome with a pomp 'never before beheld in Rome.' King Charles

[1] Dante anyhow believed this, for he accuses Boniface of having *not feared to win by trickery the beautiful Lady* (*i.e.* the Church).



49. S. Maria di Collemaggio, Aquila

and his son, Charles Martel of Hungary, led—not this time a humble donkey, but the splendid white, richly caparisoned steed whereon sat Benedetto, bearing on his head a golden crown; then, after the magnificent ceremony of consecration in St. Peter's was over, the two kings conducted him to the Lateran and stood behind his throne at the banquet.

The first care of the new pontiff, Pope Boniface VIII, was to secure the person of his predecessor; for there were many who denied the legitimacy of the new election, affirming that although Popes had been deposed (Henry III, for instance, had deposed three at the same time) no Pope could voluntarily abdicate, and that any such attempt was not only a heinous sin against the Holy Ghost, but totally ineffective.[1] Celestine had returned to his cave on Monte Morrone. Learning the design of Boniface he fled. After long wanderings he reached the Adriatic and embarked for Dalmatia; but a storm drove him back on to the Italian coast, and some good but foolish persons acclaimed him publicly as Pope and thus caused his discovery and arrest. He was imprisoned by Boniface in the castle of Fumone, the huge Cyclopean walls of which still frown over the town of Alatri, in Latium. A few months later he was found dead—probably poisoned, although monks of his Order, Celestini, are said to have possessed a nail with which, they asserted, Boniface killed his victim as Jael killed Sisera.

Having thus disposed of poor old Celestine and feeling secure of spiritual suzerainty in the kingdom of Charles, whom he regarded as his vassal, Boniface was now eager to acquire also the Sicilian realm as a papal fief, and to encircle his mitre with the double crown of the Two Sicilies. We have already seen how he induced King James of Aragon and his pious mother Constance to make an iniquitous compact with Charles, and how he instigated and fomented the long

[1] As is well known, Dante brands Celestine (it is doubtless this Pope, though not named) as having *made through cowardice the great refusal*, and places him amidst the vast multitude of ignoble spirits who *never were alive* and are condemned to rush to and fro for ever in pursuit of a fluttering flag over the dark plain of the Acheron (*Inf.* iii).

and cruel war between James and his brother Frederick, whom the Sicilians had accepted as their king.

Among the chief enemies of Boniface were the Colonna. The more powerful and arrogant he himself became and the more he robbed the Church to build up the powerful faction of the Gaetani, the more vehement was the hostility of these nobles, especially on the part of two Colonna cardinals. In 1297 Boniface took an unprecedented step and caused both of these prelates to be deposed. The Colonna family accepted the challenge. They declared the election of Boniface to be void and demanded a Council to be called. They affixed their Manifest to the high altar in St. Peter's. Boniface forthwith excommunicated the deposed cardinals and others of the family and proclaimed a Holy War against them. The Colonnas withdrew to their country strongholds, of which the chief was Palestrina. The fierce struggle ended in their overthrow and humiliation. The excommunicated cardinals and nobles presented themselves before the triumphant pontiff as suppliants, with ropes round their necks. It is said (but also fiercely denied) that Boniface by affecting to pardon them gained possession of Palestrina.[1] It is undeniable that somehow he did gain possession of it, and that, as once Sulla had done, he demolished it utterly—nothing being spared but the cathedral; for his Bull, still extant, orders the plough to be passed over the site and the furrows to be sown with salt, 'as was done to African Carthage.' After confiscating all the property of the inhabitants he ordered

[1] In Dante's poem (*Inf.* 27) Guido of Montefeltro, whom the poet puts among the flame-tortured Evil-Counsellors, describes how he was once a great Ghibelline leader against Charles of Anjou (of whose Frenchmen he at Forli made *a bloody heap*) and how he became Franciscan monk at Assisi, and how Boniface got hold of him and extracted from him the treacherous device by which Palestrina was captured: on which account his soul, claimed by St. Francis, was snatched away to hell by a 'black cherub.' Palestrina, the ancient Praeneste, is twenty miles south-east of Rome. It was famous for its Temple of Fortune (destroyed by Sulla), which was raised aloft on huge terraces. Relics of these survive. In the castle Conradin was a prisoner. The place was rebuilt by the Colonna, and again destroyed by a Pope in 1436. Since 1630 it has been once more in the hands of the Colonna family. Stephen Colonna, exiled by Boniface, took part, as a very old man, in the Rienzi tumults.

them to build another town, which he named the Civitas Papalis; but shortly afterwards in a fit of fury he had it demolished, and they were dispersed in exile. The Colonna fled to foreign courts—some even to England. Such were the deeds of the Supreme Pastor of the Church of Christ, 'waging war nigh to the Lateran, and not on Saracens and Jews' (*Inf.* 27).

For the year 1300 a Jubilee of the Church was appointed. The Pope used the opportunity to attract to Rome pilgrims and their money by proclaiming liberal indulgences for all who visited the great Roman basilicas. The result proved a great triumph for Boniface. Exalted on what was certainly for the time the highest throne of Christendom, he was reverenced as the Vicar of God by two or three million devotees who streamed to Rome from every country of Europe, each bringing his offering.[1] Among these were probably Giotto (see Fig. 50) and Dante; for, though some say Dante first saw Rome during his momentous embassy in the following year, the celebrated passage in which he likens two files of the damned in hell to two lines of Jubilee pilgrims passing over the Vatican bridge is so vivid that it surely must have been painted from the actual scene. Another celebrated writer was also present, namely Giovanni Villani—at that time a merchant. He tells us that what on this occasion he saw in Rome inspired him to undertake his *Chronicle*, which was begun in the same year (that of the action of Dante's poem) on his return to Florence and ended in becoming, after completion by his brother and nephew, the greatest of Italian histories.[2]

An immense sum was amassed from the offerings of the faithful, which were so plentiful that 'day and night,' says an eye-witness, 'two priests stood by the altar of St. Paul's

[1] It is noticeable that no princes seem to have come—a significant fact. Gregorovius says that Charles Martel of Hungary was the only exception. But as he died in 1295, and as Dante saw him in heaven on April 1, 1300, there seems to be some mistake.

[2] The last date that the elder Villani mentions is April 11, 1348, and in alluding to the Great Plague of that year (so well known through Boccaccio's *Decamerone*) he wrote, 'This pestilence lasted till . . .' meaning to fill in the date later; but he never did so, as he himself died of the plague.

holding rakes in their hands, and raking together the money.' Some of this was used by Boniface for reviving and prosecuting the iniquitous war between James of Aragon and his brother, Frederick of Sicily, and in forwarding, as he had promised to do, the designs of Charles the Lame. But the ill-gotten and ill-spent money was of little avail. In his chagrin he turned, as Urban IV had done, to the French court and invited to Italy the younger brother of the French king, Charles of Valois, grand-nephew of Charles of Anjou. On his arrival at Anagni, the home and favourite residence of Boniface, the French prince was nominated Captain-General of the Church and Pacificator of Tuscany. He was then sent by the Pope to pacify Florence, where he only succeeded in adding fury to the flames and causing the wholesale banishment of Ghibellines and disaffected Guelfs—among whom was Dante.[1] The success of Charles of Valois in the south was no greater, and after the Peace of Caltabellotta had concluded the fratricidal war between James and Frederick the Angevins and their papal ally had to renounce all hope of recovering Sicily.

All this ill-success naturally caused friction between Boniface and Charles of Valois and increased the Pope's unpopularity at the French court. Now France had of late years come forward noticeably as a new power. She had developed an independence and a national consciousness such as at that time did not exist elsewhere in Europe.[2] King Philip IV (the Fair) could feel that he had a nation behind him, and when, needing money for his wars against England and later against the Flemish, especially after his defeat at Courtray, he imposed taxes on the clergy and convents, he was defended against the fury of Boniface by French public opinion—and not only

[1] He was at Rome, sent by the Florentines on an embassy to Boniface. He never saw Florence again.

[2] Contrast the state of things in Germany. Although Albert of Habsburg (and Austria) had overcome his rival, Adolf of Nassau, his authority was supported by no national sentiment. Dante accuses him of neglecting Italy, but he was too much occupied with the disintegration of his own realm and with such revolts as that of the Swiss (W. Tell !) ; and Boniface was not far wrong when he scornfully exclaimed to Albert's envoys: 'Imperator ! . . . Imperator sum *ego !*'

50. Fresco and Statue of Pope Boniface VIII
Rome and Florence
See List of Illustrations

by that of the laity, for even the taxed clergy held to their sovereign rather than to the Pope and displayed the independent spirit of a national Church. The legate who, in 1302, brought an arrogant Bull from the incensed pontiff was imprisoned and then expelled, and the Bull was publicly burnt in Notre Dame—an act which, though it had not the far-reaching results of the Bull-burning at Wittenberg, must have made a deep impression when shortly afterwards the French States-General were, for the first time, assembled and the action of the king was confirmed by all three estates of the realm.

Meanwhile in Rome and its neighbourhood very great resentment had been caused by the wholesale peculations and appropriations of Boniface. Much of his ill-gained wealth was spent in enriching his relatives, the Gaetani, who thus became possessed of a great number of castles and splendid estates in Latium [1] (some of which are still the property of the Duke of Sermoneta and the Gaetani family) and formed a powerful clan devoted to the papal cause. All this, together with the fact that Boniface intended to excommunicate Philip, was reported by the Colonna refugees at the French court and excited public indignation in France to such a pitch that a band of crusaders was formed to liberate Christendom from a wretch whom they declared to be a pseudo-Pope as well as an open atheist, a slave of the obscenest vices, and a minion of the devil; and King Philip put himself at the head of this conspiracy, the execution of which was confided to Sciarra Colonna and to Guillaume de Nogaret, an expert jurist and a fiery advocate of the rights of the crown and the civil power.

During the night of September 7, 1303, the conspirators, who had with them a strong force of armed men, entered Anagni, and after a severe fight, during which the papal palace and the adjoining cathedral were set on fire, they forced their way into the presence of Boniface, whom they found seated on his throne, the two-crowned tiara on his head and in his trembling hands the keys and a golden cross. Sciarra, it is

[1] Among the Gaetani strongholds was the famous Tomb of Caecilia Metella, the battlements of which are said to have been erected by Boniface.

believed—though Nogaret fiercely denied it and Villani does not assert it—seized the Pope by the arm, dragged him off his throne, and tried to stab him. Finally, after being imprisoned for three days, during which for fear of poison he refused all food, Boniface was liberated by the people of Anagni and the conspirators took to flight. He was then conducted to Rome by two Orsini cardinals and a troop of 400 armed men, and when after a visit to St. Peter's and a friendly welcome from the mob he retired to the Vatican he probably imagined himself in safety, seeing that the Orsini were the sworn foes of the Colonna, and he hoped too for help from Charles the Lame. But he soon perceived that his letters were intercepted and that he was a close prisoner, the Orsini having occupied with their armed followers both the Castle of S. Angelo and the Borgo. About four weeks later (October 1303) he was found dead. It is said that in an access of fury he killed himself by running his head violently against the wall of his chamber.[1]

(9) Henry VII, of Luxemburg

The next Pope, Benedict XI, seems to have been an honourable and courageous man. Two days before being assaulted Boniface had decided to proclaim the excommunication of King Philip—from the same pulpit in Anagni Cathedral whence the ban had been launched against the two great Fredericks. Instead of carrying out this design of Boniface the new Pope liberated the Colonna from ban, with the exception of Sciarra; he ordered full restitution to be made to the Church of all that had been stolen; he condemned openly and annulled various unjust acts of Boniface; but he also openly condemned the

[1] Gross exaggerations as to his treatment are to be found in some writers, such as the Englishman Walsingham (*c.* 1400). It is, however, very remarkable how Dante, who 'drags his enemy Boniface round the walls of the fiery city of Dis as Hector was dragged round Troy,' trembles with indignation at the sacrilegious treatment of this same Pope by that 'modern Pilate,' that 'Pest of France,' as he calls King Philip (*Purg.* vii, 109; xx, 46, etc.; and for two celebrated passages in which Boniface is attacked by Dante see *Inf.* xix, 52–84, and *Par.* xxvii, 19–30).

Anagni outrage and excommunicated the chief accomplices. It was doubtless a misfortune for the Church that after eight months he died; and a still greater misfortune was the election of his successor, the Gascon Archbishop of Bordeaux, who took the name Clement V. He had been a minion of Boniface, but now, to secure election, he became a submissive underling of King Philip.[1] He was consecrated at Lyon, in the presence of the French court, and after residing about three years in France (1305–8) he removed the seat of the Papacy from Rome to Avignon, on the Lower Rhone, where for just upon seventy years (the years of the so-called 'Babylonian captivity') the Roman pontiffs continued to reside, and where they raised the enormous masses of the *Palais des Papes* that still overhang the city and the great river like a towering thundercloud.

It is somewhat perplexing that Clement, although in all else apparently the willing tool of King Philip, should have persistently resisted that monarch's desire to acquire, for himself or for his brother Charles of Valois, the imperial crown. Possibly the king was not really anxious to fight for the empty title, knowing the independent and hostile spirit of the Italian cities and remembering the ill-success of Charles; or perhaps Clement realized that with a French Emperor the Papacy would be doomed to total extinction. However that may be, he at first secretly favoured and then openly supported the claims of Henry VII, who had been elected German king and King of the Romans and was thus not only regarded as Kaiser in Germany but as the Emperor-designate, who could legitimately claim confirmation of his title by the Roman people and by papal coronation.

Henry VII, who as Count of Luxemburg had been not even a reigning noble (*regierender Fürst*) and had possessed no body of armed liegemen, was raised to the throne amidst the disturbances that followed the murder of Kaiser Albert by his

[1] Dante describes Philip and Clement as a giant and his paramour. He also, as we have seen, thrusts Clement head-foremost into a hole in the infernal Malebolge together with Boniface and Nicholas III.

nephew, John the Parricide. Since the days of Frederick II no German monarch had come to Italy to receive the golden crown.[1] But Henry's ideas were of a higher mood. His one great ambition was to re-establish the German-Italian Empire and to be crowned in Rome. The German nobles for the most part refused to accompany him, but in 1310 he assembled a few thousand men at Lausanne, crossed Mont Cenis, and was rapturously hailed by the Ghibelline and even by some of the disaffected Guelf cities of Northern Italy; and his army was considerably increased by contingents sent by several powerful lords. But there were serious difficulties to confront—firstly the hostility of the Angevin King of Naples, now Robert of Calabria;[2] secondly the hatred of the old Guelfs, such as the Neri and Donati party in Florence, who had banished both Ghibellines and disaffected Guelfs, including the poet Dante; thirdly and principally, the indignation of those who had so rapturously hailed his advent but who were bitterly disappointed because this *rex pacificus*, as he called himself, attempted to unite all local factions for imperial objects and ignored, as too petty for consideration, the personal feuds which had appropriated the names of Guelf and Ghibelline.

At first, nevertheless, the enthusiasm was great. Venice, Genoa, and Florence, where republican feeling was strong, snarled and showed their teeth, but Cremona, Padua, Brescia, Pisa, Verona, Mantua, and other Ghibelline cities and Signorie sent delegates to offer vows of fealty, and amidst much rejoicing Henry was crowned (January 1311) with the Iron Crown in S. Ambrogio at Milan.

However, the rejoicings were short-lived. As Pacificator he had restored from exile the Milanese Visconti, hoping to reconcile them with their successful Guelf rivals, the Della Torre faction; but the well-meant interference resulted in an explosion which

[1] In *Purg.* vi Dante sharply rebukes Albert for not mounting into the saddle of Empire and taming Italy—the restive and vicious filly.

[2] See p. 477. Charles the Lame had died in 1309 and Robert (his third son—for Charles Martel was nominally King of Hungary, and a second son had become cleric) was invested by Clement V at Lyon as King of the Sicilies.

must have startled him. A tumult broke out, and after much bloodshed the Torriani were expelled. Thereupon Cremona, Brescia, and other towns took up their cause and defied Henry, and he felt compelled to resign his function as *rex pacificus*, to sack Cremona and demolish her walls and to force Brescia to capitulate after a siege of four months, during which the most barbarous atrocities were perpetrated on both sides.

A whole year had now elapsed and Rome was still a long way off. In October 1311 Henry entered with his troops the unfriendly city of Genoa, where he was detained by the illness and death of his wife. In March 1312 he was welcomed at Pisa, which was, as usual, on the imperial side on account of its hatred of republican Florence. At Pisa he heard that the Colonna and other imperialists at Rome, who had already sent envoys to invite both him and Pope Clement, were zealously preparing for the coronation, but that the Orsini had made the counter-move of inviting to Rome King Robert of Naples, and that the Florentines were doing all that lay in their power, by bribing the French and the papal courts and by leaguing together the Guelf cities, to support King Robert in any attempt that he might make to eject the 'barbarous German enemy of Italy'—*lo straniero, il Tedesco, il barbaro nemico d'Italia e della sua libertà.* He learnt that in answer to these appeals and invitations Robert had sent his brother John with troops to co-operate with the Orsini at Rome, and that they had occupied the Vatican, the Castle of S. Angelo, and the Trastevere.

But in spite of all this, and in spite of Dante's passionate appeals that he should first crush that 'poisonous viper,' Florence, Henry marched southwards and in May 1312 entered the Porta del Popolo and took up his quarters in the Lateran. Then fighting began between his troops and those of King Robert. He captured the Capitol and attempted to cross the river, but was repulsed with severe losses. Finally he had to renounce his long-cherished dream of a coronation in St. Peter's and to content himself with a ceremony in the Lateran

basilica [1] and with receiving a crown from the hands of a papal legate—for Pope Clement had not ventured to come to Rome.[2]

During the intense heats of August Henry left Rome and marched northwards with his fever-stricken and much diminished army, intending to follow Dante's advice and crush Florence. But the Florentines had collected what Villani calls an 'infinite number of foot-soldiers,' besides some 4000 horsemen, and defied him, merely shutting the gates of the city that faced towards S. Salvi, where he had his camp. At last, seeing that he could effect nothing, he moved off by night, and marching southwards again, as if wishing to return to Rome, he took up quarters at Poggibonsi, not far from Siena.[3] Here he remained until March 1313. He then moved to Pisa, which he reached very worn out both in mind and in body.

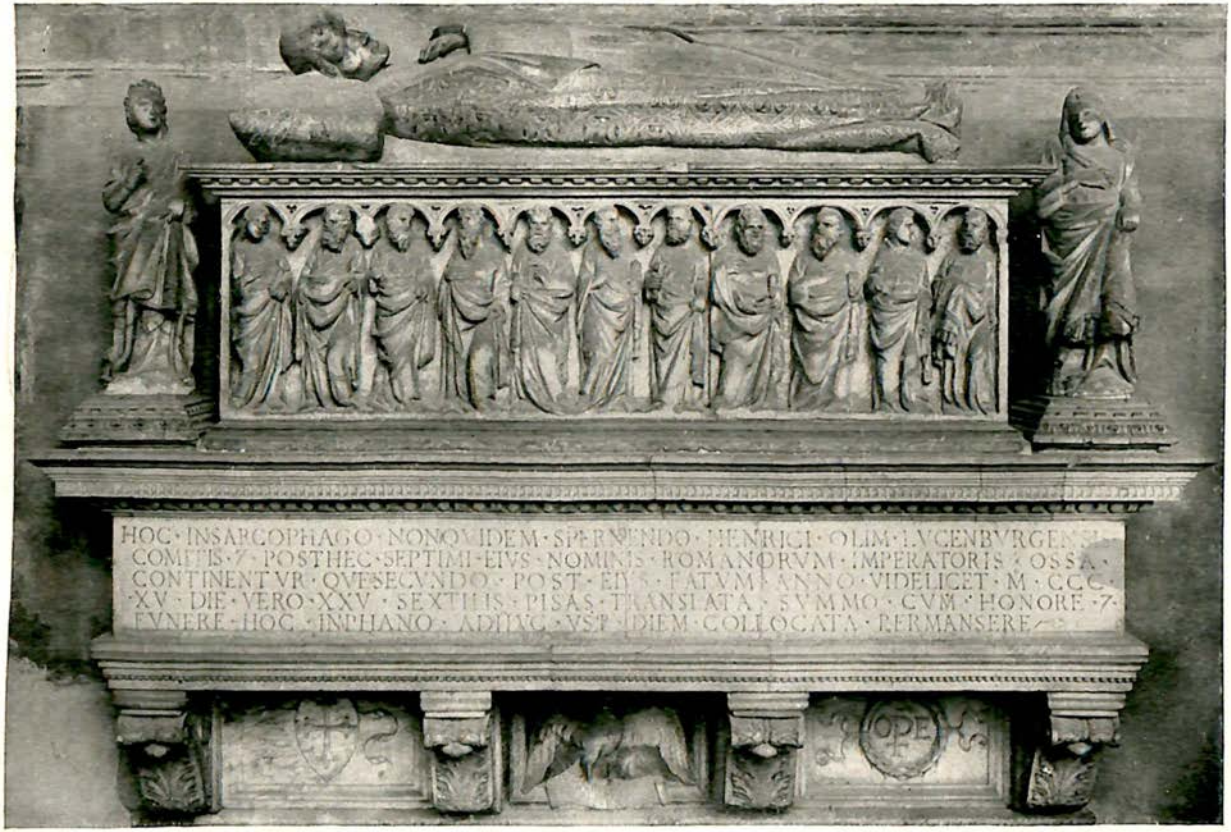
Since Henry had left Rome the people had gained the upper hand in a struggle with the nobles and had established once more a republic. They now invited him to return and receive the imperial dignity from *their* hands, intimating that they alone had the right to bestow it. Henry was inclined to accept the offer. He was also eager to chastise King Robert for his impudence, and for this purpose he had made alliance with Frederick of Sicily—an act which so enraged Pope Clement that he launched, too late, the bolt of excommunication at the Emperor.

Having collected a very considerable land army, which was to be supported by about 150 war-galleys supplied by

[1] It will be remembered that the old Lateran basilica collapsed in 896, at the time of the citation of the corpse of Pope Formosus before a Synod. The new building had been burnt in 1308 and was now freshly rebuilt and perhaps already adorned with Giotto's frescos.

[2] The legate and the cardinals at first refused to act, but the Roman people, claiming that the imperial dignity was in their gift and not that of the Pope, threatened them with death. Possibly Dante had in mind this failure of the dream of papal coronation in St. Peter's when he imagined a crown lying on an empty throne awaiting the advent of Henry in the highest heaven (*Par.* xxx, 137).

[3] Still nearer to S. Gimignano (Figs. 42 and 54) and Certaldo, the home of Boccaccio, whose father was a tradesman there. Boccaccio was born in this same year (1313), but probably at Paris.


HOC · INSARCOPHAGO · NONOVIDEM · SPERNENDO · HENRICI · OLIM · LVCENBVRGEN
COMITIS · Z · POSTHEC · SEPTIMI · EIVS · NOMINIS · ROMANORVM · IMPERATORIS · OSSA ·
CONTINENTVR · OVESECVNDO · POST · EIVS · FATVM · ANNO · VIDELICET · M · CCC ·
XV · DIE · VERO · XXV · SEXTILIS · PISAS · TRANSLATA · SVMMO · CVM · HONORE · Z
FVNERE · HOC · INPHANO · ADIVC · VSQ · IDIEM · COLLOCATA · PERMANSERE

51. Tomb of Henry of Luxemburg
Pisa

Genoa, Pisa, and Sicily, Henry marched once more southwards. It was again midsummer and the sufferings of his followers from heat and malaria were intense. He had nearly reached Buonconvento, some twenty miles south of Siena, when he suddenly died—probably from an attack of malarial fever, or blood-poisoning, although it was reported and generally believed that the fatal poison had been administered by a Domenican priest in a sacramental wafer, or the rinsings of a sacramental chalice. His body was carried back to Pisa and entombed in the cathedral. Later it was removed to the Campo Santo (see Fig. 51 and explanation).

With the death of Henry of Luxemburg the medieval German-Italian Roman Empire (to give the somewhat fictitious dignity a full and fairly accurate title) passed away for ever. Other 'Holy Roman Emperors' crossed the Alps for divers political objects, but no other came, as he did, to re-establish the Roman Empire, as the successor of Augustus, on its old foundation—the will of the Roman people. With the death of Boniface VIII and the removal of the pontifical Seat from Rome to Avignon came to an end also the Italian Papacy of the Middle Age.

But this so-called Middle Age did not likewise come suddenly to an end. It was at this time gradually merging into a transition period such as the twilight spell between the first grey of dawn and the first gold of sunrise—or perhaps, without indulging in misleading solar similes, we may point to literature and art as, in this case at least, truly reflecting 'the very age and body of the time' and as being the best means for determining the various stages in the development of what goes by the name of the Renaissance or the Rinascimento.

The age of Boniface VIII and of Henry VII was also the age of Dante, and in Italian literature Dante's gigantic figure seems to fill the whole of the space between the real Middle Age and the beginning of the New Learning. From different standpoints he is for us the one great poet of medieval literature and the first great modern poet. He stands alone. Before him there were a few faint songsters who in the new

Italian tongue practised the sweet and gracious rimes of love,' but (to revert to solar similes) they were like morning stars that faded away before the sun. And after his death we come, as it were, to a sudden precipice; for, although in their lives Dante and Petrarch overlapped by seventeen years, there is between them a gulf so impassable that they seem to belong to two quite different ages. Thus a remarkable break in the history of the Italian people would seem to be here indicated. It is true that many extend the 'Middle Age' to a considerably later date. Some indeed would extend it to the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 or even to the discovery of America in 1492. But it seems not unreasonable to regard the great poem of Dante, written between 1301 and 1320, as the true boundary-stone between medieval and modern Italy, or perhaps we should call it Italy of the Renaissance. In regard to art—sculpture and painting—the case is similar, although the various stages and their transition periods are not quite coincident with those of Italian literature. The revival of sculpture, for reasons that will be noted later, preceded that of painting and that of literature, but, roughly speaking, we may call the Pisani and Giotto contemporaries of Dante, and, like him, these artists stand almost unpreceded and are followed by a period such as intervenes between the wild flowers of spring and those of summer—a somewhat long and barren interval, which produced little of note except Orcagna and the Gaddi and led up to the great outburst of art in the days of della Quercia, Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Donatello, and Fra Angelico. It is at the beginning of this transition period and somewhere nigh the end of Dante's life that I have determined to conclude this narrative of the history of medieval Italy—a narrative that has covered rather more than a thousand years.

The boundaries are of course doubtful. They were probably for the most part uncertain and fluctuating. Corsica and Sardinia were long under Saracen rule, but were freed by Pisa and Genoa about 1016. After the battle of Meloria (1284) the Genoese expelled the Pisans. Though the Popes assumed the right to give away the investiture to various princes (Frederick II, the Angevins, and the Aragonese), the islands may be regarded on the whole as belonging to the northern republican States and Signories.

NOTE ON DANTE AND HENRY VII

WHEN Henry came to Italy Dante had been an exile for nearly ten years,[1] and had perhaps lately returned from wanderings that may have led him as far as Paris and the Netherlands, or even England. He was possibly present when Henry received the Iron Crown at Milan, and is said on this occasion to have 'devoted his counsels, if not his sword, to the Deliverer of Italy,' possibly presenting him with a copy of *De Monarchia*, which doubtless Henry failed to read. Soon afterwards from his retreat in the Casentino the poet sent to his native city a furious manifest beginning with the words *Dantes Allagherius florentinus et exsul immeritus sceleratissimis Florentinis intrinsecus*. It is filled with sarcasm and invective. 'What will avail,' he asks, 'your ditch, your bastions and towers, when the eagle, terrible with pinions of gold, comes swooping down upon you?' And while Henry still lingered at Pisa in the spring of 1312 Dante wrote him the letter already mentioned, in which he addresses the would-be Roman Emperor in the most amazing terms, calling him not only a Sun-god and a Sacred Sepulchre but even the Lamb of God, while he abuses Florence as a fox, a viper, a hydra, a tainted sheep, and so on. But, as we have seen, Henry took no notice.

Of far greater interest than these extravagant and furious epistles is the *De Monarchia*, a Latin treatise in three Books which was probably written about the time of Henry's descent into Italy. It is a striking proclamation of the hopes that then inspired many minds and a passionate appeal to divine Justice for some 'Messenger from heaven,' such as was the

[1] For a few facts connected with Dante's life see ch. iv. I have occasionally borrowed (with permission) from my edition of Dante's *Inferno*, which was published by the Oxford University Press in 1874.

Angel who in Dante's poem came to succour the two poets and to open with his wand the gate of the fiery city of Dis.

In *De Monarchia* Dante argues at great length and with great ingenuity and erudition that the twofold nature of man needs two distinct guides—two Suns, as he says in his poem—the spiritual and the temporal, and he declares the Roman Emperor to be supreme in matters temporal. Through an universal Empire alone is it possible to attain universal peace—such peace as is necessary for humanity in order that it may devote itself to the highest objects of existence. He discusses the question whether the Roman people alone have the right to bestow imperial office, and brings proofs to show that it is so —that Rome is the one true centre of Christendom and of the Empire. He then asks whether the imperial authority is derived direct from God or through the Pope, and founds his decision on the fact that Christ recognized the temporal power as distinct from the spiritual.

But Dante was far more than a medieval casuist and dialectician. He had sight of much that was not dreamed of in the philosophy of the schoolmen. In this Universal Empire of his is limned in somewhat shadowy but unmistakable outline that visionary form of universal peace and brotherhood and world-wide Federation which some of the greatest and noblest in every age have tried to summon up from the Limbo of unfulfilled hopes into the light of reason and realization, but which has now once more, like Eurydice, disappeared in the lurid gloom of a war such as the world has never known before. Dante's conception, says Sir William Ramsay, was that of a balance of forces—a commonwealth of cities and nations free and self-ruled, but under a supreme central authority. Such an ideal Empire has been most nearly realized, some would say, by our own British Empire; others would perhaps point to the age of the Antonines—the one age, according to Gibbon, in which life has been really worth living.

EMPERORS AND POPES (1190–1313)

(See tables of the Hohenstaufer, the Norman Kings, and the Angevins, pp. 382–83, 410, 477)

EMPERORS	POPES	ACCESSION
Henry VI, of Hohenstaufen; son of Frederick Barbarossa. King of the Sicilies 1189; German king 1190; Emperor 1191–97. *(In Germany Otto of Brunswick and Philip, Henry's brother, rivals.* **Otto** *crowned Emperor.)*	Clement III	1187
	Celestine III *(Forced to crown Henry as Emperor.)*	1191
Frederick II King of the Sicilies 1198 *(under guardianship of Pope Innocent)*; German king 1215; Emperor 1220–50.	**Innocent III** *(Crowns Otto IV Emperor 1208.)*	1198
	Honorius III	1216
	Gregory IX	1227
	Celestine IV *(Reigns eighteen days. Vacancy nearly two years.)*	1241
	Innocent IV	1243
	Alexander IV	1254
Conrad IV, son of Frederick II, succeeds as German king, but dies in 1254. Manfred, illegitimate son of Frederick, makes himself King of the Sicilies, but is slain at Benevento, 1266. Conradin, son of Conrad IV, invades South Italy to assert his claim to the Sicilies, but is defeated by Charles of Anjou at Tagliacozzo and beheaded at Naples, 1268.		
(The period 1254–73 in German history is called the Great Interregnum. Besides Conrad and Conradin there were various rival kings, as Richard of Cornwall and Alfonso of Castile.)	Urban IV	1261
	Clement IV	1265
	Vacant	1268 to 1271
	Gregory X	1271
	Innocent V	1276
	Hadrian V	1276
	John XXI	1276
	Nicholas III	1277
	Martin IV	1281
	Honorius IV	1285
	Nicholas IV	1288
	Vacant	1292 to 1294
	Celestine V *(Abdicated after four months.)*	1294
	Boniface VIII	1294
	Benedict XI	1303
	Clement V *(From 1309 to 1377 the seat of the Papacy was at Avignon.)*	1305
Rudolf, of Habsburg. German king and King of the Romans 1273–92. *(Never visited Italy, nor even crowned Emperor, though called 'Imperador' by Dante and regarded as Kaiser independently of Rome.)*		
Adolf, of Nassau, 1292 *(Not Emperor.)*		
Albrecht, of Habsburg, 1298 *(Not Emperor.)* *Murdered by John the Parricide* 1308.		
Henry VII, of Luxemburg Elected King of Romans 1308; German king (Emperor-designate) 1309; crowned with Iron Crown at Milan 1311; crowned Emperor at Rome 1312 *(but only in the Lateran Church and by a papal legate)*; dies 1313.		

CHAPTER I

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

c. 1200–1300

MUCH has already been said about what, for want of a more accurate name, is generally called religion, many phases and influences of which we have noted interweaving themselves in the intricate web of medieval Italian history. Without attempting to disentangle the threads and to follow up their connexions further than has been done in the narrative, I shall here note some of the more striking developments of religious sentiment in the thirteenth century.

During the age of the Great Heresies, when men damned and massacred their fellow-men on account of some futile formula that claimed to define the incomprehensible, there were of course large sections of the Christian Church which scornfully rejected Rome as the one repository of orthodoxy; and also amidst those who rather arrogantly called themselves 'Catholics' we find many—and among them even Emperors and Patriarchs—vigorously contesting the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Roman pontiff.

After the triumph of Roman Catholicism in Western Christendom, *heresy*—that is, doctrinal dissent from Rome—had to hide its head for some centuries; but ere long we begin to hear of an ever-increasing indignation and hostility caused by the growth of the temporal power and the insatiable ambition of the Popes. This hostility was not of the nature of heresy; it was due to political motives, not to doctrinal differences; indeed, it was often strangely combined with deep reverence for the Pope, though a hated political adversary.

Thus, even as late as the fourteenth century, Dante laments bitterly the maltreatment and death of his great foe, Boniface VIII, speaking of the outrage as if he saw 'Christ in his Vicar captured, derided, offered vinegar and gall, and slain among robbers.'' And still stranger than this combination of reverence and rancour was what in many cases seems to have been a total eclipse of the moral sense—a total incapacity to realize, even in the case of a detested political enemy, that a greed for worldly power, to say nothing of hideous vice and crime, was incompatible with the possession and the transmission of apostolic gifts and with the claims of a Pope to be the Vicar on earth of the holy and gentle Founder of Christianity.

But although this strange superstitious feeling in regard to the Papacy proved long ineradicable, the state of things was being profoundly, if gradually, affected by the rise of republican liberty and by the illumination shed from such centres of learning as the Universities of Bologna, Salerno, and Paris.[1] The Dark Age of superstition, in which men had paid reverence (as indeed some still do) to traditional religious authority irrespectively of all questions of morality, was giving way to the light of reason and a truer understanding of Christ's teaching; Christendom was developing a moral sense; and when the Roman Church began to stain her hands with the blood of those who refused her doctrinal guidance the hostility to the Papacy ceased to be only political; it became inspired by moral indignation. 'The noblest feelings of humanity,' says Gregorovius, 'revolted against the hideous enormities perpetrated in the name of Christ's religion and were deeply moved by sympathy with those who suffered in the heroic defence of the liberty of conscience.' Green too, who gives a scathing account of the state of the Anglican Church and its exploitation by Rome at this period, tells us that 'the old reverence for the Papacy now faded away into universal

[1] As we have frequently noted, the Popes, although the natural foes of liberty and progress, often sought alliance with the republics—a fact that may well give us pause, seeing that it was just the light of liberty and progress which revealed the hideous inner corruption of the Papacy and fostered reform.

resentment.' But such words would be far too feeble to express the state of feeling in Italy after Pope Innocent's crusade against the Albigenses.

The degradation of the spiritual on its contact with matter is intimated to us in vivid allegory by all great poets and philosophers. Of such degradation the most striking illustration in the history of humanity is offered by the contrast between the life and teaching of Christ and the so-called Christianity of later days. But in human nature glows inextinguishable a particle of divine fire—or somewhat that like a mirror catches gleams of celestial light—and amidst all the grotesque masquerade and gruesome phantasmagoria of world and flesh and devil that pass before us when we read the chronicles of the medieval Church of Rome we detect here and there amid the endless and tumultuous procession a few human faces, as it were, aglow with earnest belief in Christ's own Gospel of unworldliness and purity and self-denying love. Doubtless many of those who had the courage to act as well as to feel were misled by enthusiasm and exaggeration into dangerous paths, and a gross degradation of their sublimest teachings frequently ensued. But that was inevitable.

That the shameless licentiousness and greed of the clerics and the papal court, as well as other crying abuses, aroused indignation in a certain section of the Church even in early days is evident from many signs. One of the first general protests against these abuses was formulated by the members of the French Abbey of Cluny, founded by Fra Berno in 910. This attempt at internal reform was at first directed solely against the evil lives of the clerics, especially the degraded Benedictine monks, and although it perhaps unwisely adopted clerical celibacy as one of its main principles its influence doubtless effected much good not only in the provinces but also at Rome, where Odo, the disciple of Berno, was favoured by the republican leader Alberich and was allowed to reform various Roman monasteries. Unfortunately (as in the case of the later Franciscan Order) the Popes, perceiving the popularity of this movement towards reform, captured Cluny,

so to speak, and used the Cluny reformers as their emissaries for propagating the doctrines of the spiritual supremacy and the temporal power of the Papacy. Thus the monk Hildebrand, later (1073) Pope Gregory VII, the great adversary of the Emperor Henry IV, was a Cluny monk; and the moral enthusiasm that inspired the first founders of Cluny degenerated into sectarian and party virulence, as is seen in the case of the famous reviver of ascetic monasticism, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who, though himself a sincere reformer of moral abuses, opposed fanatically all reasonable and Scriptural teachings and not only gave his voice in favour of the feeble Innocent II against the Cluny Pope, Anacletus, but fiercely persecuted both Abelard, the philosophic reformer of Paris, and his disciple, the ill-fated Arnold of Brescia, who was hung and burnt at Rome by the English Pope Hadrian.

A striking evidence of the yearning that existed among the clerics themselves and among the people at large for a return to the simplicity and spirituality of early Christianity is the enormous popularity attained by various books advocating an unworldly and Christlike life and prophesying the advent of an era of peace and brotherhood. The *De Imitatione*, or perhaps the original on which in the fifteenth century Thomas à Kempis founded his book, is believed by Renan and a few others to date from this epoch (*c.* 1200). Another such book, more certainly of this period, was the *Evangelium eternum* of a Calabrian monk, Joachin. It contained commentaries on the Apocalypse and other parts of the Bible, in which the writer attempted to harmonize the Old and the New Testaments and cited Scripture to prove the near advent (in the year 1260) of the reign of the Spirit.

Contemporaneous with these attempts at internal reform were various movements of a less orthodox nature. There was a sect of Bulgarian Christians who called themselves *Catharoi*, *i.e.* Purists or Puritans. They seem to have combined customs such as those of the Essenes with an Oriental, or Manichaean, belief in two active principles, a Spirit of Good and a Spirit of Evil, such as the Power of

Light and the Power of Darkness—the Ormuzd and Ahriman—of the Zoroastrians.[1] Some such doctrines as these, together with a zealous advocacy of purity, unworldliness, and poverty, were introduced into Provence and Central France, and were received enthusiastically by many, especially by the Albigeois, the inhabitants and neighbours of Albi, a town on the Tarn. These Albigeois or Albigenses would probably have remained unmolested had they merely preached and practised the spiritual life, even if their theories on the subject of the Power of Darkness were tainted with heterodoxy; but, logically if unwisely, they declared war against the corruption and luxury of the Roman clergy and the papal court, and thus, as we shall see, brought on themselves annihilation.

Another sect was founded at Lyon by Peter Wald (Valdes). These Waldenses, or *les pauvres de Lyon*, were, from the orthodox standpoint, more virulent heretics than even the Albigenses, for they denied that the Roman Church was in any true sense the Church of Christ, and they appealed, as later reformers did, from the authority of the Pope and of tradition to that of the Bible. Moreover, like later dissenters, they rejected apostolic succession, and some of them entrusted to lay congregations the election of pastors.

In Italy itself doctrinal heresy—that is, the rejection of Roman infallibility in doctrinal matters—for a time made but little progress, but there was a strong and extensive movement against the temporal power of the Church (not only among its *political* opponents) and in favour of drastic reform in regard to the luxury and immorality of the ecclesiastics—unworldliness and even poverty being applauded as the only means by which the Church could regain its spiritual influence.

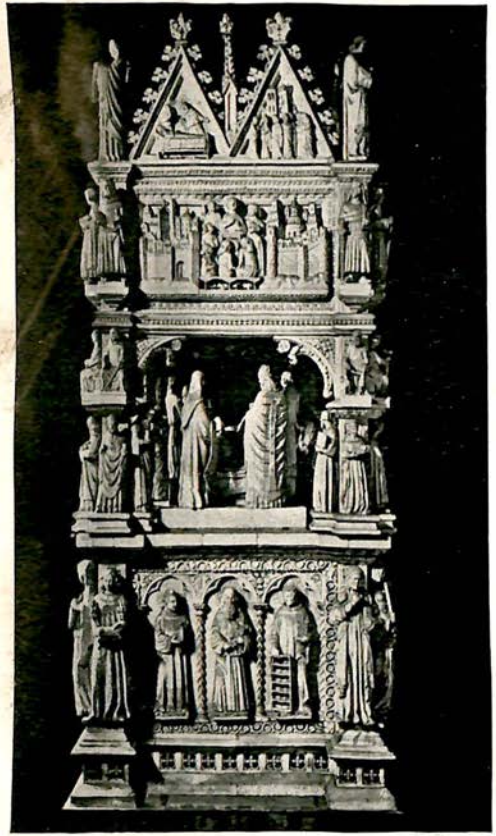
Of this movement an interesting example is afforded by the Pataria ('ragged Canaille') of Milan. The Patarini, or Paterini, like the Gueux of later days in the Netherlands, adopted with pride the term of contempt. At first, during

[1] The doctrine of the real existence of Evil as an active principle is, of course, like the doctrines of Transmigration and Purgatory, a very convenient solvent of certain intellectual difficulties, and it can scarcely be condemned as heretical by those who accept the Biblical Devil.

the stormy period that followed the death of Archbishop Aribert in 1045, the Pataria was the popular, anti-imperial party in Milan, at feud with the nobles and the superior clergy, and for this reason (but for no other) hostile also to the independence of the Ambrosian Church, which the Milanese prelates and aristocracy favoured. Thus we have one of the perplexing combinations so common in the history of Italian faction —a popular and unorthodox party on the side of the Papacy, gulled by empty promises of reform. But that did not last very long. Recognizing Rome as the real foe of their religious reforms, the Patarini discarded their papal ally and developed into an openly heretical sect,[1] which became the object of furious attack on the part of the Popes and of those 'dogs of the Lord,' the Domenicans.

The rise of the Albigenses has been already described. Their extermination took place in 1205. Pope Innocent III, who, as we have seen, succeeded in imposing his over-lordship on almost every monarch in Europe, was determined to brook no heretics in Western Christendom. At first, it is said, he hoped to effect his purpose by argument, and sent preachers to Languedoc. These were joined by a Spanish canon, the notorious Domenic (Domingo of Calahorra), who, on his return from a mission to Denmark, found himself in l'Albigeois and at once devoted himself with holy ardour to the work of conversion; and when Pope Innocent, finding that his version of Christ's evangel was useless, determined to try fire and sword and sent his Inquisitors and legates armed with authority to extirpate the abomination, the nobles of Southern France (as Villari says) were organized by these papal emissaries into a veritable army of Crusaders, who, excited by the inflammatory preaching of Domenic and his fellow-fanatics, such as the sinister and merciless Bishop Folquet of Toulouse, and captained by the bloodthirsty Simon de Montfort, hurled themselves on the defenceless population and turned many of the fairest districts of Provence and Central France into a desolation.

[1] The word *paterino* has become a synonym for *eretico*.



52 TOMB OF ST. AUGUSTINE

TOMB OF ST. DOMENIC 504

How far Domenic himself approved or incited, or took actual part in, these horrors is not certain; it is certain however that the Inquisitors of Toulouse conferred on him the title of 'Persecutor of Heretics,' and that the whole machinery of the Inquisition was shortly after his death entrusted to his Black Friars. But whether we are justified in stating, as Mrs. Jameson asserts, that he was so utterly and devilishly heartless as to 'gaze unmoved at the smoking ruins of Beziers, where at the command of Abbot Arnold twenty thousand human beings were murdered,' may be questioned. He was probably not unmoved. His whole nature was probably deeply moved by what he called love of God and of man—by an intense yearning to save the souls of his fellow-men from what he sincerely believed to be as terrible as hell itself—liberty of thought. Let us refrain from holding inquisition over his character, although we may not be able to enter the Spanish Chapel, or S. Maria Novella itself, without a shudder, or even pass Angelico's wondrous Crucifixion in the cloister of S. Marco without sadness of heart and perplexity of mind.

'In the latter years of his life,' says Villari, 'Innocent, as if horrified at his own work, would have wished to restrain the forces which had effected almost the total destruction of a whole region. But it was too late. Blood had been shed and the ruin of the land was complete. The fugitives from Provence flooded Italy. They moved pity by the accounts of their misfortunes and aroused hatred against him who had been the first cause of their cruel sufferings. Thus they contributed towards the antagonism between the Papacy and those classes with which the Popes had formerly allied themselves in their contest with the Empire. From this time onward the relations of the Italian people towards the Papacy began to experience a most momentous change.'

In 1215 Domenic was honoured at Rome by the Pope's approval of his zealous activities and his institution of preaching friars, and when soon afterwards Innocent died the formal confirmation of the Domenican Order was granted by Honorius III. Three years later (1219) the centre of the Order

was established at Bologna, and before his death there in 1221 Domenic's Black Friars, in co-operation with the Inquisition, had worked very hard at extirpating heresy in Northern Italy; but 'Italy was almost as badly honeycombed with heretics as Languedoc had been. The Patarini . . . abounded in Milan. In Ferrara, Verona, Rimini, Florence, and other towns anti-sacerdotal sentiment was very strong. In Viterbo the heretics were numerous enough to elect their Count. . . . In Assisi a heretic was elected *Podestà*.' (Sedgwick.)

A few months probably before Domenic arrived at Rome another celebrated Order had won the approval of Innocent.[1] Francis Bernadone of Assisi and his small band of devoted followers were received at first at the papal court with considerable suspicion, and doubtless some contemptuous amusement. What Francis had come to request was not permission to extirpate heretics, but merely permission to found a society of men who should attempt to live according to the precepts and the example of Christ. Such a visionary scheme had no interest for Popes and cardinals, but—so the story runs—an opportune dream induced Innocent to reflect, and reflexion made him perceive the possibility of using for his own purposes this new form of religious enthusiasm. The story of St. Francis of Assisi—his renunciation of all worldly ideals, his self-consecration to poverty and to a humble and Christlike life of loving service for humanity and for all creatures great and small—the building of the little chapel of the Portiuncula and the institution of the mendicant and preaching Grey Brothers and the Sisters of S. Chiara and the Lesser Brethren—the visit to the Soldan in Egypt—the calm and beautiful passing away of the saintly soul—all this has been told fully and sympathetically by many writers, so that I need not make the attempt to retell it in what would necessarily be a painfully concise form. Nor need we try to explain the fact that the aims and ideals professed by these two men, Francis and Domenic, had a certain external

[1] As in the case of the Domenicans, the Pope's death delayed the confirmation of the Franciscan Order. It received, as Dante says, its 'primal seal' from Innocent in 1214 and was 'incoronalled with a second crown' by Honorius in 1223.

resemblance, both their systems originally recognizing the principle of poverty and that of intercourse with humanity rather than monastic seclusion. That such external resemblances may exist in spite of the profoundest differences in the real nature of things is of course a truism. The difference in this case is perhaps best intimated by quite simple words, such as those used by Villari: 'Domenico andò a predicare la crociata contro gli Albigesi, infiammando gli animi ad una sanguinosa persecuzione degli eretici. Francesco invece si sarebbe sottoposto ad ogni tormento piuttosto che far soffrire una qualunque creatura.' While Domenic was inciting and leading the bloody and merciless crusade against the Albigenses Francis was visiting hospitals, tending lepers, helping to carry stones to build churches, meditating verses full of tender love for all things living and of gratitude for the glories and beauty of nature.

Some indication of this deep-lying difference is afforded by the fact that St. Francis is said to have refused, when he met Domenic at Rome, to allow his Order to be fused with that of the Domenicans. Doubtless he saw plainly what kind of spirit actuated his fellow-founder. Both Orders (as was also the case of the far older Benedictine Order) soon deviated widely from the Rules of their founders,[1] so that comparisons drawn from their later history are apt to prove misleading; but the fact that the Domenicans have been ever on the side of worldly power as agents of tyranny and persecution seems a proof of the essential difference between the spirit of Francis and that of Domenic. Indeed, the followers of St. Francis have themselves often suffered persecution. On account of the Christian charity and human fellow-feeling that they showed even towards the unorthodox they were accused of treason by Pope Gregory IX, who, with the help of the free-thinker and semi-Moslem Frederick II, carried on a violent

[1] The lower church at Assisi, begun shortly after the death of Francis, who bade his disciples build no large churches, and the (much later) magnificent S. Maria degli Angeli, built over the remains of the little Portiuncula, are striking proofs of this. As Dante says, the followers of St. Francis trod in his footsteps 'setting toe on heel,' *i.e.* in reverse direction.

crusade against heretics; and some of these, condemned by the Inquisition and burnt at Rome about the year 1225, were probably Franciscan Minorites.

In Cantos XI and XII of the *Paradiso* Dante makes the spirit of Thomas Aquinas, the great Domenican schoolman, utter a magnificent panegyric on St. Francis, and the spirit of the Franciscan Bonaventura describe the militant activities of Domenic—

> That champion consecrate,
> Kind to his own and cruel to his foes,
> Whose impetus with greater fury smote
> Wherever the resistance greatest was.

The Franciscan's praise of Domenic, although the canto scintillates with splendid thoughts and language, seems at times somewhat forced and hesitating, whereas the words of Thomas Aquinas (Domenican and dryasdust schoolman as he was) seem to tremble with emotion as he describes the life of St. Francis—the rising, as it were, of a glorious sun—the marriage of Francis to his bride, Poverty—the founding of the Order—the 'final seal' of the *Stigmata*—the departure of the sainted spirit to its native realm of heaven. In lines of the most wondrous music Dante intimates to us what he believed to be the characteristics of these two 'Princes of the Church':

> *L'un fu tutto serafico in ardore,*
> *L'altro per sapienza in terra fue*
> *Di cherubica luce uno splendore.*

During the latter half of the thirteenth century, as we shall see in another chapter, the new light of learning and of art ceaselessly spread its illumination, till liberty of thought and of Christian sentiment had so won its way onward that, after the death of Dante's great enemy, the 'triple tyrant' Pope Boniface VIII, the medieval Papacy for a season almost disappeared as a political and religious influence—glowering like some savage wounded animal in the cavernous gloom of the vast papal palace at Avignon. Amidst this break-up of the old system we find many strange phenomena; for old superstitions prove long ineradicable after the jungle itself has been razed.

53. Assisi

One of these strange phenomena of the thirteenth century is the free-thinking, oft-excommunicated, half-Oriental Emperor Frederick II, who although an open disbeliever, and encouraging at his Sicilian court not only the learning and the voluptuous manners but also the religion of the Saracens, undertook a Christian crusade against the Saracens of Palestine and actually assumed the crown of Jerusalem, and then, on his return, zealously persecuted home heretics, handing over many to Gregory to be burnt.

The curious state of religious excitement that prevailed in Italy during this transition period is evidenced by the appearance of numerous sects, some of which for a time attained very considerable, though short-lived, influence, especially in the free cities of North and Central Italy. As was but natural, many strange extravagances occurred. Among these we may note the episode of the Flagellants, or 'Scourgers.' A sudden seismic wave, as it were, of religious hysteria began at Perugia and spread rapidly through and beyond all Italy. Thousands and thousands of frenzied, half-naked penitents, men, women, and children, in great companies traversed the whole country, howling their lamentations and prayers and scourging each other pitilessly. At every town they reached they poured forth imprecations and entreaties in an attempt to put an end to political and religious feuds; they visited prisons and strove to induce malefactors to repent; they liberated many prisoners. At last the civil powers, alarmed, issued severe penalties against these excesses. 'The hard-headed rulers of Milan,' says a writer, 'erected six hundred gallows on their borders and threatened to hang every Flagellant who came that way.' After about 1260 we hear no more of them.

When we seek for the causes that produced such strange effects we find that they were without any doubt the widespread despair caused by the endless horrors of war and intestinal feuds and the growing conviction that the Church had failed completely as bearer of the Gospel of love and peace. The one great incentive that fired the hysterical extravagances of the Flagellants no less than the seraphic

ardour of St. Francis was the yearning for the reign of Christian love on earth. And how universal this yearning was in Italy is proved by many other attempts at peace-making, some of them of a very dramatic and emotional nature. On one occasion (about 1275) the leaders of the rancorous factions in Florence were persuaded to meet on the sandy flats of the Arno and to embrace each other and vow eternal reconciliation —a vow soon broken. On the plain outside Verona a vast multitude (some say of 400,000 human beings) met, collected from various cities by a monk of Vicenza, and, melted to tears by the eloquence of preaching friars, beat their breasts, lamenting their sins and supplicating God's mercy, and took solemn oaths—alas, soon to be utterly forgotten—that war and party feuds should be abolished among them for ever.

CHAPTER II

THE REPUBLICS AND SIGNORIES

DOWN TO *c.* 1320

WE have noted the gradual rise of the free cities of North Italy since the days of Hildebrand and Henry IV and have seen how the Lombard League, victorious over Frederick Barbarossa, laid the foundation of what might have proved, but did not prove permanently, a great republican Confederation. After his crushing defeat at Legnano and his acceptance of the situation by the Peace of Constanz the Emperor loyally recognized the liberties of the northern Communes, and his son, Henry the Cruel, was so much taken up with his endeavours to establish his claim to the crown of the Norman kings that he made but little effort to enforce his authority over Lombardy, though he set his dukes over Tuscany and Umbria. His son too, the Emperor Frederick II, was almost wholly engrossed by his southern dominions and exercised scarcely any authority in Northern Italy except what was voluntarily conceded to him by Ghibelline cities in their desire to secure imperial aid against their rivals. Thus the northern cities little by little detached themselves from the Empire and became republican, while South Italy and Sicily became monarchical; and when the pitiable execution of Conradin at Naples in 1268 put an end to the Hohenstaufen dynasty these southern regions passed into the power of Angevin and Aragonese monarchs, under whose rule they were destined to remain for many years.

But besides the northern Communes and the southern monarchies there was a Papal State composed of regions of Central Italy, such as parts of Latium, Tuscia Romana, and

Sabina, in which the Popes exercised a certain amount of effective authority—a matter, of course, totally distinct from the claim that they made to overlordship in the Two Sicilies: in Tuscany, in Pentapolis (Emilia), the March of Ancona, the duchy of Spoleto, and elsewhere. This Papal State (*Stato della Chiesa*) was of a vague, inorganic, and fluctuating nature. Ever and again the Emperors had treated the actual as well as the imaginary Papal States as integral parts of the Empire. Thus Henry VI placed his brother, Duke Philip, as his Vicar in Tuscany and others of his captains as governors in Romagna and the Marches; Frederick II too, in spite of his pious promises, occupied Romagna and other regions claimed by the Papacy; and Manfred, whose soldiers helped the Florentine Ghibellines to their victory at Montaperti (1260), made one of his captains the imperial governor of Florence, and for a time, until the arrival of Charles of Anjou, was master of much of the papal territory in Central Italy. Nominally of course Charles of Anjou favoured the Popes, but practically he too was their master and did little to extend their sovran rights, so that it is not surprising that at last, in 1278, Pope Nicholas III found it convenient to renounce the papal claims to Romagna, Pentapolis, Ancona, and Spoleto in favour of the Emperor Rudolf of Habsburg.

Thus it was only in a comparatively small territory that latterly the Pope exercised sovran rights—rights which he often had to share with the republican government at Rome; and he had to rely on the somewhat precarious loyalty of his legates and his subjects, and through insurrections, both democratic and aristocratic, he frequently lost his hold on various cities, such as Perugia and Viterbo. Finally, when Clement V removed the Papal Seat to Avignon (1309) the authority of the Popes in Central Italy dwindled away to a mere shadow.

Thus with a few strokes may be roughly intimated the state of Italy during the period when the chief northern cities attained their fullest development in commercial prosperity and republican liberty and then suffered—some of them—the same fate that in earlier days befell not a few of the ancient

Greek republics, where it so often happened that some eminent political leader, or head of a faction, gained the favour and abused the confidence of the people and established himself as 'tyrant.' The process has repeated itself many times in history. At first the people and the feudal nobility come into conflict. Then, as trade and general prosperity increase, there ensues the still bitterer conflict between capital and labour, between the *nouveaux riches* and the working classes. The old and poorer nobility then allies itself with the people. At last some bold and gifted leader of this caste wins the unconditional support of the popular party and by a *coup d'état* seizes the reins of power. Thus it was with the Greek *Tyrannides* and thus with the Italian *Signorie.*

The interesting and instructive story of the rise and the fortunes of the Italian Republics has been related, with full accounts of the chief of these cities, by many authors from the times of Dino Compagni and Giovanni Villani (*c.* 1300) down to the *Istorie fiorentine* of Machiavelli (*c.* 1500) and onwards to Sismondi and the numberless writers, political, literary, and artistic, of our own days. It will be here impossible to do more than state a few facts connected with some of these cities, and for this purpose I shall select once more Florence, Milan, and Venice, the stories of which we have already traced up to about 1200; and I shall add some remarks about Verona, Bologna, and other towns.

Florence (*c.* 1200–1320)

The early history of Florence has already been sketched. From the first it had been adverse to the arrogant domination of Teuton Emperors and nobles, and its freedom may be considered to have begun on the death of Countess Matilda in 1115, when it first elected its own Consuls. But, although it was destined to become the most notable of the Italian Communes, its evolution was slow. The greater part of Tuscany remained under imperial influences for a considerable time after the Lombard cities had won independence, and there were Tuscan cities, such as Pisa and Arezzo, which, even after

the days of Dante and Henry of Luxemburg, remained strongholds of Ghibellinism while Florence was gradually, amidst many reverses and relapses, securing that republican liberty which was not finally overthrown until the rise of the Medici in the fifteenth century.

The early development of the Florentine republic was stunted by the introduction of baneful feuds. I have already related how the murder of Buondelmonte, assassinated at the base of the ancient statue of Mars, divided the city into two embittered factions headed by the Donati and the Uberti, and how the imperialists made use of this feud in order to forward their own interests. Supported by the powerful influence of the Emperor Frederick II, these Ghibelline nobles succeeded in expelling the democratic and papal Guelf leaders. But on the death of Frederick the Guelf party was recalled and reconstituted as an important factor of the Florentine Commune, under the leadership of a *Capitano del Popolo*, and finally, when in 1259 Ezzelino, the great Ghibelline tyrant of North Italy, was overpowered and killed, the popular faction in Florence gained such power that in its turn it expelled its rivals. Thus in Florence the Guelfs were for a season triumphant and the white lily was made vermilion.[1] But the exiled Ghibellines collected a large army at Siena and, captained by Farinata degli Uberti, with the help of the Sienese and Pisans and Manfred's German cavalry inflicted a crushing defeat on the forces led against them by the Florentines. The battle took place (1260, five years before Dante's birth) at Montaperti, not far from Siena. The carnage, especially round the Florentine *Carroccio*, was so terrible that it made, says Dante, the Arbia incarnadined with blood; and so disastrous was the rout that the Guelfs, not daring to return to their own city, withdrew to Lucca. How Florence was then doomed by the victors to be razed to the ground

[1] Dante, *Par.* xvi, 153. The ancient Florentine (and Ghibelline) ensign was a white lily on red; the Guelfs adopted a red lily on white. Dante's words 'made vermilion' evidently also intimate the stain of blood. His great ancestor, Cacciaguida (p. 368), was devoted to the Empire. The later Alighieri, Dante's immediate progenitors, were staunch Guelfs.

and how it was saved by Farinata is known to all readers of Dante.[1]

For six years after this battle of Montaperti the Ghibelline influence was supreme at Florence, and the city was governed by Manfred's imperial Vicar, Guido Novello; but when Manfred was slain at Benevento (1266) the Guelfs once more came into power. At first they submitted in a somewhat disgraceful fashion to Pope Clement IV and elected as their *Podestà* Charles of Anjou, who for a time governed Florence by his emissaries. But republicanism, fostered by the immense increase of trade and wealth, had now struck root firmly and was beginning to assert its vitality.

The Guilds were the basis of the constitution now adopted by the popular party. Of these Guilds, or *Arti*, there were seven greater and five (later fourteen) lesser.[2] Each had its Council, its president or Consul, and a military official—the *Gonfaloniere*. These formed the chief magistracy of the popular government. The Consuls however gave way for a time to *Anziani*[3] and in the year of the Sicilian Vespers (1282) the title was changed to that of Priors. Three (later six) Priors of the greater Arts were invested with the highest magisterial authority in the Commune and formed the executive Signory. About the date of Dante's Priorate (1300) a *Gonfaloniere della Giustizia* was associated with the Priors. This official possessed in seasons of sedition and disturbance almost dictatorial power and thus in time became the most important personage in the State.

It was during the early period of the Priorate (*i.e.* in 1284) that Florence suddenly gained a great increase of power and prosperity by a crushing defeat that her ally, Genoa, inflicted on her great rival, Pisa, which city had for long blocked her

[1] *Inf.* x. Farinata, rising erect in his fiery tomb and with proud, calm dignity conversing with Dante—' as if he had Hell in great disdain '—is one of the grandest and most vivid portraits in the *Commedia*.

[2] Dante enrolled himself in the greater Guild of Doctors and Apothecaries (*Medici e Speziali*).

[3] See Dante, *Inf.* xxi, 38: *Un degli anzian di Santa Zita*, *i.e.* of Lucca. The *Anziani* of Lucca and Pisa answered to the Florentine *Priori*.

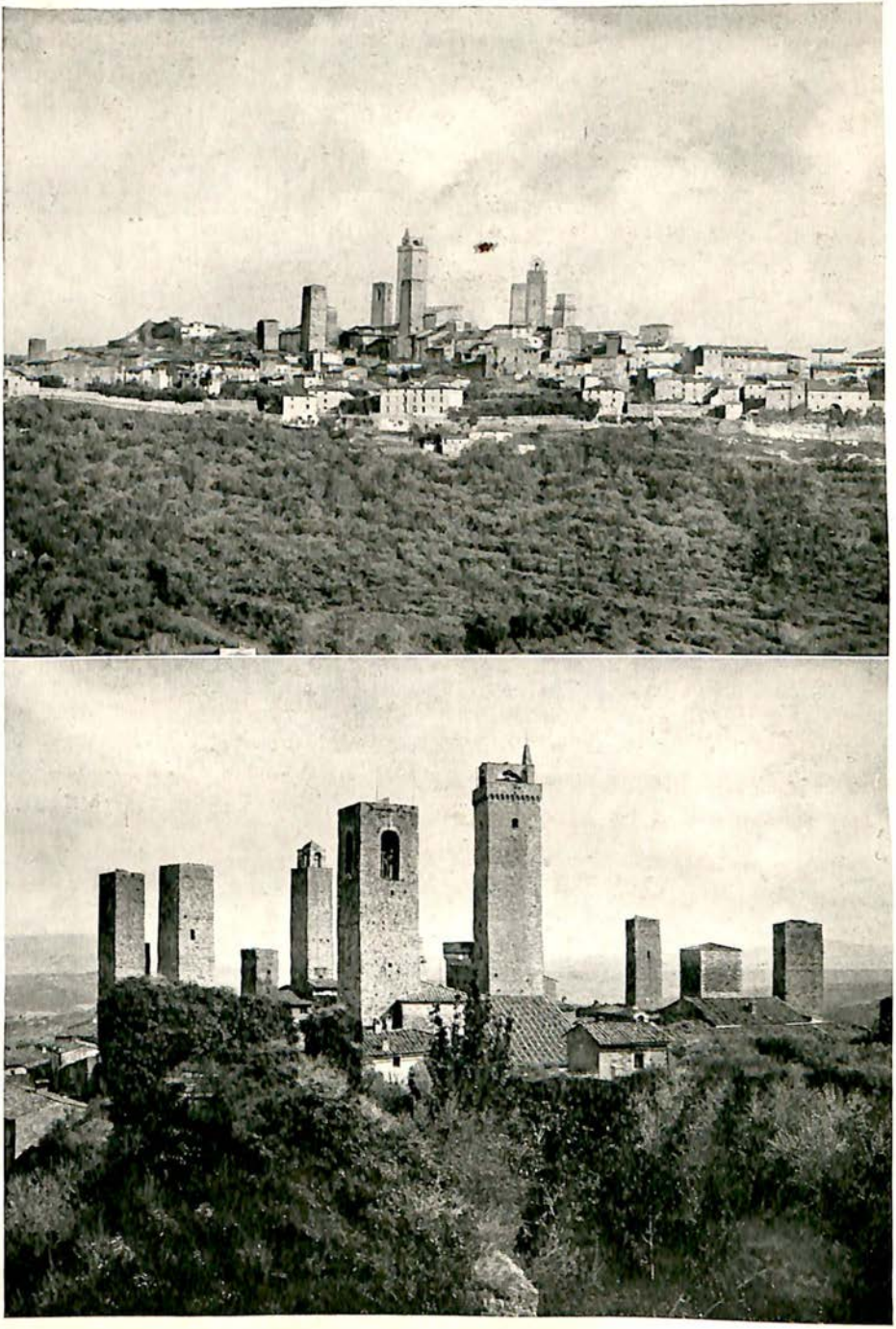
access to the sea. The battle was fought near the rocky islet of Meloria, off Livorno. So great was the booty and the number of the prisoners that the saying arose, *He who will see Pisa must go to Genoa.* One of the Pisan commanders at Meloria was that Count Ugolino della Gheradesca whose tragic story inspired one of the most touching and vivid passages in Dante's great poem. After the battle he established himself as despot in Pisa, but he was accused of having occasioned the defeat of the Pisan fleet by treasonable complicity with the Florentine

COIN OF THE SONS OF UGOLINO, *c.* 1290
See p. xxviii

Guelfs, and his rival, Archbishop Ruggieri, succeeded in treacherously bringing about his death—perhaps starving him to death together with his sons and grandsons in the *Torre della Fame*—facts which induced Dante to doom them both to the frozen sea of the Traitors in the deepest pit of the Inferno.

Ugolino's fall was followed by the re-establishment of Ghibelline supremacy at Pisa. The disaster of Meloria put an end to its successful maritime and trade rivalry with Florence, but it remained a staunch political adversary, true to its imperial principles, and it frequently tried its strength against its victorious rivals—evidence of which facts is supplied by its famous Campo Santo, where one may see not only the tomb of the last genuine Holy Roman Emperor, Henry of Luxemburg, but also the chains that once barred the harbour of Pisa and were captured in 1362 by Genoa and Florence and restored, as a sign of Italian unity, in our days.

Other Tuscan cities that for a time favoured the anti-republican cause were Arezzo, Siena, and S. Gimignano. The



54. S. Gimignano

aid given by Arezzo to exiled Ghibellines induced the Florentines in 1289 to attack the Aretines; and they overthrew them at Campaldino. At this battle Dante, then twenty-four years of age, was present, as he tells us [1] in the fragment that still survives of one of his letters. 'I was there,' he says, 'a novice in arms, and had great fear, and at last great joy.' A still more determined Ghibelline city was at first Siena, which, as we have seen, gave such effectual aid to the Florentine exiles at the battle of Montaperti. But ten years later (1270) it changed its policy. By the influence of Charles of Anjou, who after Manfred's fall possessed himself of most of the Tuscan cities, Siena joined the Guelf league, and she remained fairly independent and republican till a later age, when (*c.* 1490) Pandulf the Magnificent established his Signoria over the city. S. Gimignano's fate was very different. In early days it became a fairly independent Commune which was inclined to favour republican Florence. Dante visited it, about 1300, as an envoy from Florence, and is said to have made a speech in what is now called the *Sala di Dante*; but in spite of his eloquence democratic liberty was ruined by the party feuds of the local nobility, especially that of the Ghibelline Salvucci against the Ardinghelli.[2] Finally about 1353, by the complicity of the Guelf Ardinghelli, Florence was enabled to proclaim its protectorate over the city.

When Dante was twenty-eight years of age—some three years after the death of Beatrice—the Florentine State gained a most important advantage by the public sanction of the *Ordinamenti della Giustizia*, which conferred on all citizens equality before the law. Most unfortunately the chance that Florence now had of developing into a model republic was for a time frustrated by the introduction from Pistoia—that 'den of noxious beasts,' as Dante calls it—of a new feud, that of the Neri and Bianchi, whose quarrel was taken up by two

[1] See also *Inf.* xxii, 4, and *Purg.* v, 92. In the next year he was present at the capitulation of Caprona, a fort on the Arno held by the Pisans. See *Inf.* xxi, 94, where he gives a vivid picture of the scene.

[2] Thirteen of over fifty (?) towers built by the nobles of S. Gimignano still lend a very striking appearance to this *città delle belle torri*. See Fig. 54.

rival Florentine families, the Donati and the Cerchi. The chief leader of the Neri-Donati party, Corso Donati, allied himself with Pope Boniface VIII and, aided by the visit of Charles of Valois to Florence in 1301, succeeded in ejecting the Bianchi-Cerchi, who were accused of being not only disaffected Guelfs but disguised Ghibellines. Among these exiles was the poet Dante.[1]

While Dante was wandering about as an exile, probably at that time in the Lunigiana (which lies around me as I write these words), the people of Florence rose against the tyranny of Corso Donati; and he soon afterwards met his death—perhaps by violence, perhaps by an accident.[2] But these events did not allow Dante to return to his native city. When exiled he had gone over openly to the Ghibellines; but he had already abandoned them, disgusted and determined to 'form a party for himself.'

The subsequent history of Florence was for many years that of a free republic. It was disturbed now and then by war and by popular tumults, such as that of the Ciompi in 1378, but on the whole it enjoyed liberty and prosperity until the rise of the Medicean Signoria.

Milan and other Towns (*c.* 1200–1320)

While Florence was thus winning her way towards republican liberty many of the North Italian Communes (Venice and Genoa being brilliant exceptions) suffered the fate that has been described. In Verona—the home of the Montecchi and Capuletti—the bloodthirsty Ezzelino, as we have seen, established his tyranny, as also in Padua, Vicenza, Treviso, and other cities. After his death (1259) Mastino della Scala

[1] For the facts connected with Dante's banishment see pp. 485–86. Ten years previously he had married Gemma, probably a sister of Corso Donati, leader of the ultra-Guelfs. Though Dante never mentions his wife, he evidently had great affection for Piccarda, Corso's sister, whom he met in Paradise, and also for Forese, Corso's brother, though he condemns him for gluttony to terrible punishment in Purgatory.

[2] Dante seems to confirm the report that he was thrown (doubtless in a scuffle) from his horse (in the Casentino) and dragged by the stirrup (*a coda d'una bestia tratto, Purg.* xxiv).

was elected *Podestà* and perpetual *Capitano del Popolo*, and thus began the dynasty of the Scaligeri. Of this family the best known is that Can Grande at whose court Dante for a time found a home, and experienced

come sa di sale
Lo pane altrui, e come è duro calle
Lo scendere e il salir per l'altrui scale.

In like fashion the Gonzaga established themselves in Mantua, the Margraves of Este in Ferrara, Modena, and Reggio, the Correggi and Visconti in Parma, the Montefeltri

COIN OF MILAN, *c.* 1260

See p. xxviii

in Urbino, the Malatesta family in Rimini, the da Polenta in Ravenna.[1]

Of special interest are the annals of Milan. Its story down to about 1200 has already been briefly told. After it had arisen from the ashes to which the German Barbarossa reduced it and had won its independence by the victory over the Teuton oppressor at the battle of Legnano and the treaty of Constance it had for some time a curious triple constitution. The most powerful of the three bodies politic was the *Credenza of St. Ambrose*, which represented the popular party. The *Molta* represented the minor nobility and the *Credenza of the Consuls* the higher nobility. Each of these bodies had its own magistrates and formed a kind of republic by itself.

[1] Guido da Polenta was Dante's friend in his last days. At Ravenna the poet doubtless often saw as a child the little Francesca, daughter or niece of Guido, afterwards wedded to and killed by Gianciotto Malatesta, as all readers of the *Inferno* know. The name of the Mantuan Gonzaga awakes memories of Hamlet.

This state of things naturally led to dissension, and, as usual, dissension led to the rise of a dictator. Thus about 1250 the Torriani (the della Torre family) espoused the popular cause and came into power. But they behaved so despotically that Archbishop Otto, of the rival family of the Visconti, placed himself at the head of the aristocratic (Ghibelline) party and was enabled to eject them (1277) and to dominate Milan for a long period. Otto was succeeded by Matteo, who, although for some years he was driven from the city by the exiled Torriani, was restored by Henry VII, when that 'peacemaker' came in 1311 to Milan to receive the Iron Crown; [1] and with German help he succeeded in massacring and almost annihilating his rivals and founding the famous dynasty of the Milanese Visconti.

A remarkable, though short-lived, Signoria was that of Guglielmo Spadalunga (*Longsword*), Margrave of Monteferrato. About 1270 he made himself master of a large number of Lombard towns, among which were Novara, Vercelli, Asti, and Pavia. But his fictitious realm fell to pieces at once when, about 1290, he was overpowered by a coalition of some of the Communes that he had enslaved.

It is interesting to note that the army of these Communes was led by one of the early ancestors of the present King of Italy—Amedeo of Savoy. The earliest known ancestor of the House of Savoy was a certain Count Umberto, called Biancamano, who, descending from the Savoy mountains, gained a footing by fighting and clever alliances in Piemonte and in 1033 helped Conrad II to conquer Burgundy. In 1310 we hear of another of these Savoy Counts, Luigi, being elected Senator of Rome. The family during many centuries by its valour and energy has proved its worthiness for its present high distinction.

[1] Henry VII, it will be remembered, proclaimed himself *rex pacificus* (somewhat as the German Wilhelm of our day), but found it a 'military necessity' to take a bloody part in Italian politics. His destruction of Cremona is paralleled by that of Louvain.

55. S. Zeno (Maggiore), Verona

GENOA AND VENICE (*c.* 1200–1320)

We have already heard of the notable part that in early times Genoa took in the struggle against the Saracens and how, after having been captured and plundered by Saracen pirates in 936, it regained its maritime power and as the champion of the Ligurian towns and the ally of Pisa swept the seas with its galleys. Also we have heard how the Genoese joined in the first Crusade and helped to set Baldwin on the throne of Jerusalem and became a great commercial and colonial power in the Eastern Mediterranean. The presence of external foes, first Saracens and afterwards powerful lords of Liguria, caused a coalition of the popular party with the lesser nobility. This coalition was called the Compagna, and the election of Guglielmo Boccanegra as *Capitano del Popolo* in 1257, or perhaps the final triumph of the popular party in 1270, may be regarded as the beginning of the Genoese republic and of its great maritime power and commercial prosperity. In 1284, as we have seen, Genoa crushed its rival, Pisa, in the naval battle off Meloria. Some forty years later (1298) it utterly destroyed the fleet of Venice near Curzola. About eight thousand Venetians were made prisoners, among them the traveller Marco Polo, who wrote in prison his famous work *Milione*. Thus we take leave of Genoa at the acme of her greatness—for not many years later her sea-power was crippled by a serious defeat off Chioggia. Then, by the victories of Doge Andrea Dandolo about 1350, and the capture of the Genoese fleet in the Lagunes in 1380, the maritime supremacy of Venice over her great rival was permanently established.

The story of Venice from its earliest beginnings down to about 1200 has been already briefly told. Its political and artistic history during the thirteenth century continues to show many interesting characteristics diverse from those of the other Italian Communes.

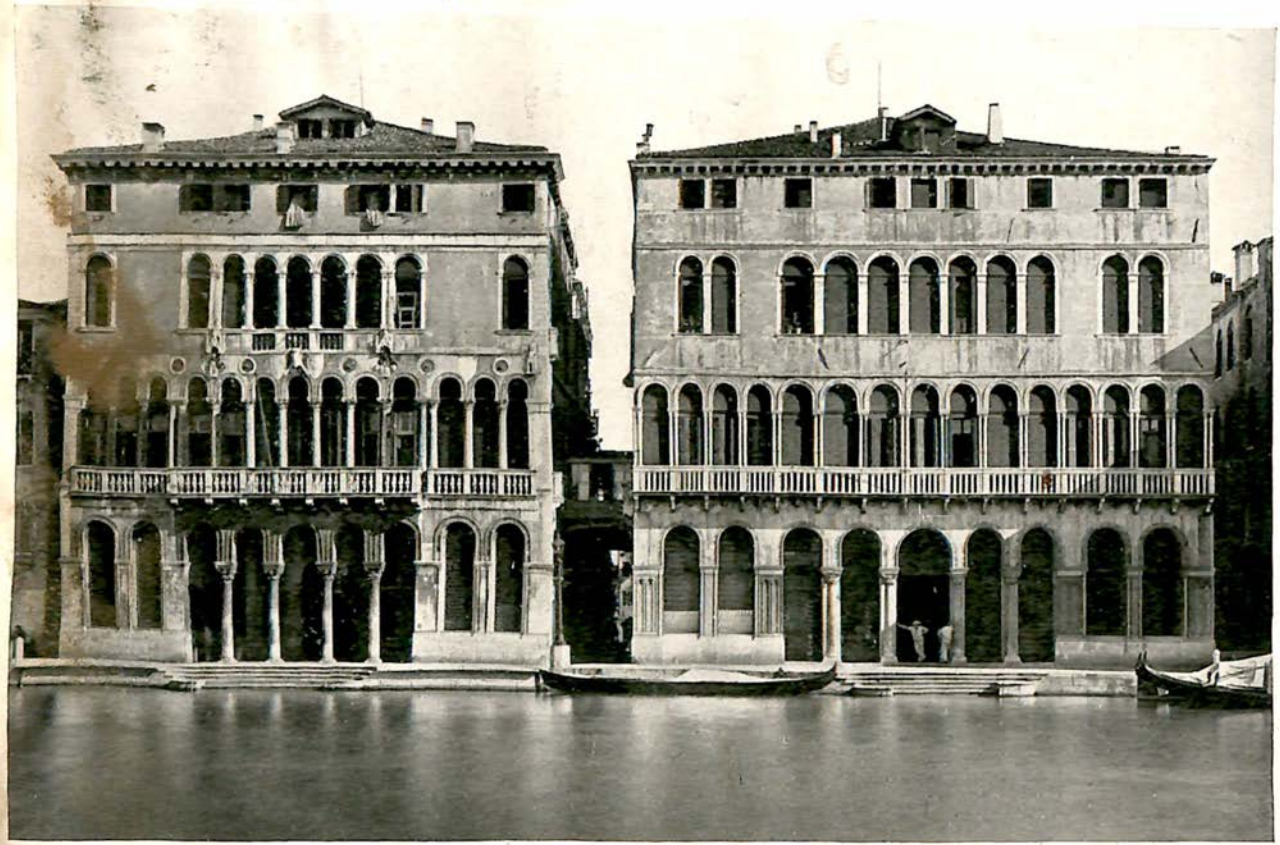
Firstly, as regards its internal political history, its development was in the direction of oligarchy, or what we may perhaps call a patrician rather than a democratic republic. The old

Venetian families were for the most part not, as in other North Italian cities, a feudal Germanic aristocracy, but were of ancient Roman stock (Venice and its islands having been a favourite residence of wealthy Romans in early days). The close connexion, too, of Venice with Byzantium resulted in the introduction of wealth and luxury and of Oriental ideas not favourable to democracy.

In early days the Doge was indeed chosen by the general voice of the people, who in their popular assembly (the *Arengo*) had means of representing their will. The Doges however differed essentially from the *Gonfalonieri* and *Capitani* and *Priori* of the Communes, for they were not temporary presidents, but were elected for life. And although the people used their rights and limited the Doge's powers by means of a Council and a Senate (*Maggior Consiglio* and *Pregadi*), the democratic gain was cancelled by the fact that these Councils were selected from the wealthy classes and that every new reform diminished more and more the numbers of those from whom the councillors could be chosen, so that in course of time the tendency towards oligarchical government was no longer to be restrained. At almost the same time when Florence was passing those *Ordinamenti della Giustizia* which excluded the nobility from the government and gave legal equality to all Florentines the Venetians decreed the momentous *Serratura* (closing) of their Great Council, which act excluded the whole body of ordinary citizens from election and limited the candidature to a comparatively few noble families.[1]

But many of the Venetian nobles of this period had gained their wealth and rank by commerce, and the old noble families, ousted by these plutocrats, grew so discontented that at last, headed by Baiamonte Tiepolo, they made a violent and vain attempt to overthrow the constituted government (1310). The committee instituted to investigate the origins of this conspiracy held office for a series of years, and at last by a

[1] In 1315, says Villari, the first register of these families was published. In later times (sixteenth century) this register acquired the name of 'The Golden Book' (*Libro d'oro*).



56. Palaces Loredan and Farsetti, Venice

decree passed in 1335 it was declared permanent. This was the notorious and formidable *Council of the Ten,* of which we hear so much in later times.

As regards the external development of Venice during the thirteenth century, its maritime power and trade were very favourably influenced by its fortunate position, which enabled it to serve as an emporium for commerce between Eastern countries and the north-western parts of Europe. In the disgraceful capture and sack of Constantinople during the so-called fourth Crusade by the so-called Latins (Franks, Flemings, and others) the Venetians took an active part, and were rewarded by an immense extension of their commerce in the East, where their merchants enjoyed many privileges. The result in Venice itself was a marked revival of Byzantine influence—conspicuous especially in architecture and mosaics.[1] This Byzantine influence lasted at Venice for a long time, strongly affecting and surviving that Venetian Romanesque style which I have already mentioned and shall have to mention again. (See p. 434 *n.* and Fig. 56.)

As we have seen, the Venetians were severely defeated in 1298 by the Genoese fleet. During the next half-century and more Genoa developed an activity very injurious to Venetian trade and acquired some of the Venetian possessions in the East, and it was not till the end of the fourteenth century that Venice became unquestionably the Queen of the Adriatic and established her supremacy over her rivals in the Levant. When we come to consider the rise of Italian Gothic we shall see that it was not until a somewhat late period that this style of architecture began to find favour at Venice. Here we need only note that this Venetian Gothic has special and beautiful characteristics, being affected not only by local but also by Eastern influences—among which, as Ruskin has pointed out, the Saracen is sometimes recognizable.

[1] *E.g.* the older mosaics of the vestibule in St. Mark's. Much fine marble and other treasures—among them the famous bronze horses—were brought from Constantinople, *c.* 1204, by the ' blind old Dandolo ' and his warriors.

CHAPTER III

ART

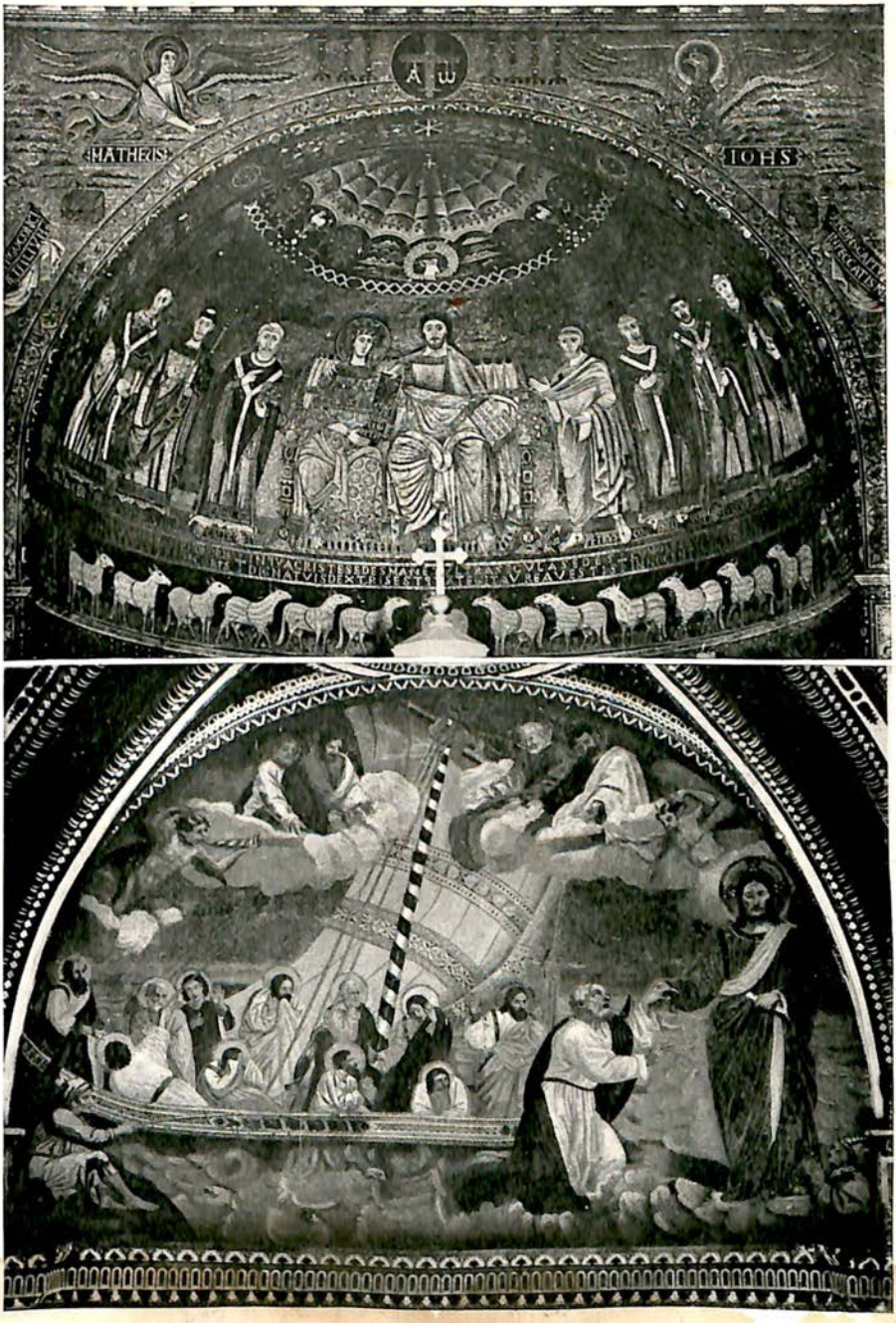
c. 1200 TO *c.* 1320

IT has been impossible in this volume to treat the subject of art fully or continuously, and now, although we have arrived at a period during which most important and interesting developments originated, I shall have to select a few facts that seem best to illustrate these new tendencies; and I shall simply state my own impressions and conclusions for what they are worth, instead of wearying the reader with theories and criticism and with the multitudinous names of artists and their works, many of which may for him perhaps awaken no memories of what is great and beautiful.

(1) **Mosaics.** On this subject it will be well to recapitulate a few facts. In a former chapter we traced the development of Christian mosaics and noted the differences between the nobler Roman style and the more gorgeous and decorative but less artistic and less dignified style of the Byzantine school. These differences are well illustrated by the splendid Roman and Byzantine mosaics at Ravenna, while at Rome itself we find a wonderful series of works illustrative of the Roman style.

The earliest extant specimen of Christian Roman glass-mosaics (*c.* 320) is that which adorns the tomb of the daughter of Constantine the Great, now the church of S. Costanza fuori le mura. It might perhaps be more rightly called a specimen of transition from ancient to Christian art, for the older portions are purely pagan in subject and treatment (genii, vines, etc.), and the Christian subjects are treated in the ancient decorative fashion.[1]

[1] It will be remembered that also the fifth-century mosaics in S. Maria Maggiore show a very curious pagan treatment of Christian subjects (see p. 270).



57 (1) Mosaic in S. Maria in Trastevere
(2) Giotto's Navicella in St. Peter's
Rome

Of early Roman mosaics that are purely Christian the finest (*c.* 350) is that in the tribune of S. Pudenziana (Fig. 24). Another very grand and beautiful work somewhat later in date (*c.* 530) is to be seen in the church of SS. Cosma and Damiano—once an ancient temple overlooking the Forum. A later example again (*c.* 825) is the fine mosaic in S. Prassede (Fig. 24)—which, however, in its inartistic figures and over-decorated apparel shows a tendency towards 'Byzantine deformity.' However, a glance at photographs of these five works of early Italian (Roman) artists will show that the art of mosaic decoration at Rome kept at nearly the same level for some five hundred years, and was generally characterized by a dignity of style which at times rose to sublimity.

Then—about the year 900—this Roman Christian art seems to have died down to the root. For about two centuries (900–1100) there is almost a total blank, during which we discover only rude attempts in a style evidently due to degenerate Byzantine influences. Towards the end of the twelfth century—about the time of Innocent III—Byzantine influences having become extinct, a new growth, so to speak, began to shoot upwards from the old root. In Rome we find examples of what we may regard as old Roman mosaic conceived in a new spirit. One of the earliest and finest specimens of this new style—which we may perhaps call 'Romanesque'—is the grand mosaic (of about 1180) in the church of S. Maria in Trastevere (Fig. 57, 1). Further examples of this revived art are to be found in S. Clemente (twelfth century) and S. Paolo fuori, a portion of whose vast apse-mosaics, dating from about 1220, escaped the conflagration of 1823. A still later and very fine example is Torriti's mosaic, the Coronation of the Virgin, in the apse of S. Maria Maggiore. Then about the end of the thirteenth century we have the admirable lower portion of the great apsidal mosaic of S. Maria in Trastevere, perhaps the work of Cavallini (about whom more later), and, lastly, the famous *Navicella* (Fig. 57, 2) probably by Giotto, who was in Rome about 1298–1300.

Thus we are able to trace in Rome with continuity the rise

and disappearance and revival of the Roman Christian art of mosaic down to the days of Giotto.

The revival of painting about 1300 exercised an influence on the art of mosaic which was not entirely to its advantage.[1] Much as one must admire Giotto's *Navicella*, it is apparent that here we have lost nearly all trace of that grand repose which often lends the older Roman work such impressive dignity. Doubtless we have received in exchange something very admirable; but the exchange is not quite satisfactory.[2] Painting was beginning to assert its rights and to ignore those of the older art of mosaic.

In connexion with Roman art of the thirteenth century (whose fair promise to take the lead in the revival of art was, be it noted, nipped in the bud by the transference of the Papal Seat to Avignon) a few words must here be said on the interesting but rather obscure subject of the Cosmati. To Vasari, the sixteenth-century biographer of Italian artists, these Cosmati seem to have been unknown, but their names have been discovered on numerous monuments of a very original and beautiful character, and it appears that several artists (viz. Lorenzo, Luca, Jacopo, and Giovanni) belonging to three generations of the family of Cosmati were distinguished as architects, mosaicists, and sculptors.

A speciality of so-called Roman Cosmati work (though found also in Sicily and elsewhere) is a handsome, decorative inlay made of small sawn slabs and dies[3] of coloured stone—porphyry, verde antico, pavonazzetto, and other precious marbles, found in abundance among the ruins of ancient Rome—and illuminated with pieces of gilded and brightly coloured glass-compost. This inlaid work they used

[1] It likewise affected the art of bronze-relief—a fact very noticeable when one compares the Florentine Baptistery work of Andrea Pisano and the exceedingly beautiful but too 'picturesque' work of Ghiberti.

[2] It is interesting to compare the new, picturesque, and animated style of Giotto's *Navicella* with the impressive dignity of his master Cimabue's mosaic (Christ and St. John) in the apse of Pisa Cathedral.

[3] Also the very beautiful inlaid pavements (*opus Alexandrinum*) seen in many old Roman churches, such as S. Maria Maggiore and S. Maria in Trastevere, are sometimes attributed to the Cosmati.

58. Pulpit at La Trinità della Cava
Near Salerno

for the decoration of altars, baldachini, pulpits, and columns, especially the spiral columns that were used as stands for the great Easter candles (see Fig. 58). But of all so-called Cosmati works the most striking and important are numerous monuments by the younger Cosmati in which this decoration is used in combination with what was apparently otherwise almost unknown then in Rome, namely, Gothic architecture. The superstructures of these tombs are so purely Gothic in style that some writers have even suggested that the younger Cosmati may have visited France or England and have copied Gothic monuments there and have combined the Gothic architectural framework with Roman mosaic and the characteristic inlay-work. This combination is eminently successful. There is in Rome nothing more beautiful than these Cosmati monuments, such as the tomb of Cardinal Gonsalvo (1299) in S. Maria Maggiore, and that of William Durand (Fig. 59) in S. Maria sopra Minerva,[1] and that of Cardinal Matteo d'Aquasparta [2] in the Aracoeli—all three probably by Giovanni de' Cosmati (Johannes Cosmas), the grandson of the first of these artists.

Curiously enough, these Cosmati are not mentioned by Vasari; but he mentions a Roman artist, Cavallini by name, whose works and existence are so undiscoverable that some have believed him to be a fiction. Vasari asserts that this Cavallini executed the façade and some of the mosaics of S. Paolo fuori (later destroyed by fire) and also the fine lower portion of the great apsidal mosaic of S. Maria in Trastevere, already mentioned. He is also believed by some to have had some share in the *Navicella*, which is generally attributed to Giotto. But nothing certain is known about him.

It was not, however, only in Rome that a new spirit began to manifest itself towards the end of the twelfth century. In Sicily, as will be remembered, during the days of King Roger and William the Good (*c.* 1130–90) magnificent mosaics were

[1] The *only* old Gothic church in Rome—now horribly disfigured, but still interesting for its vaulting.

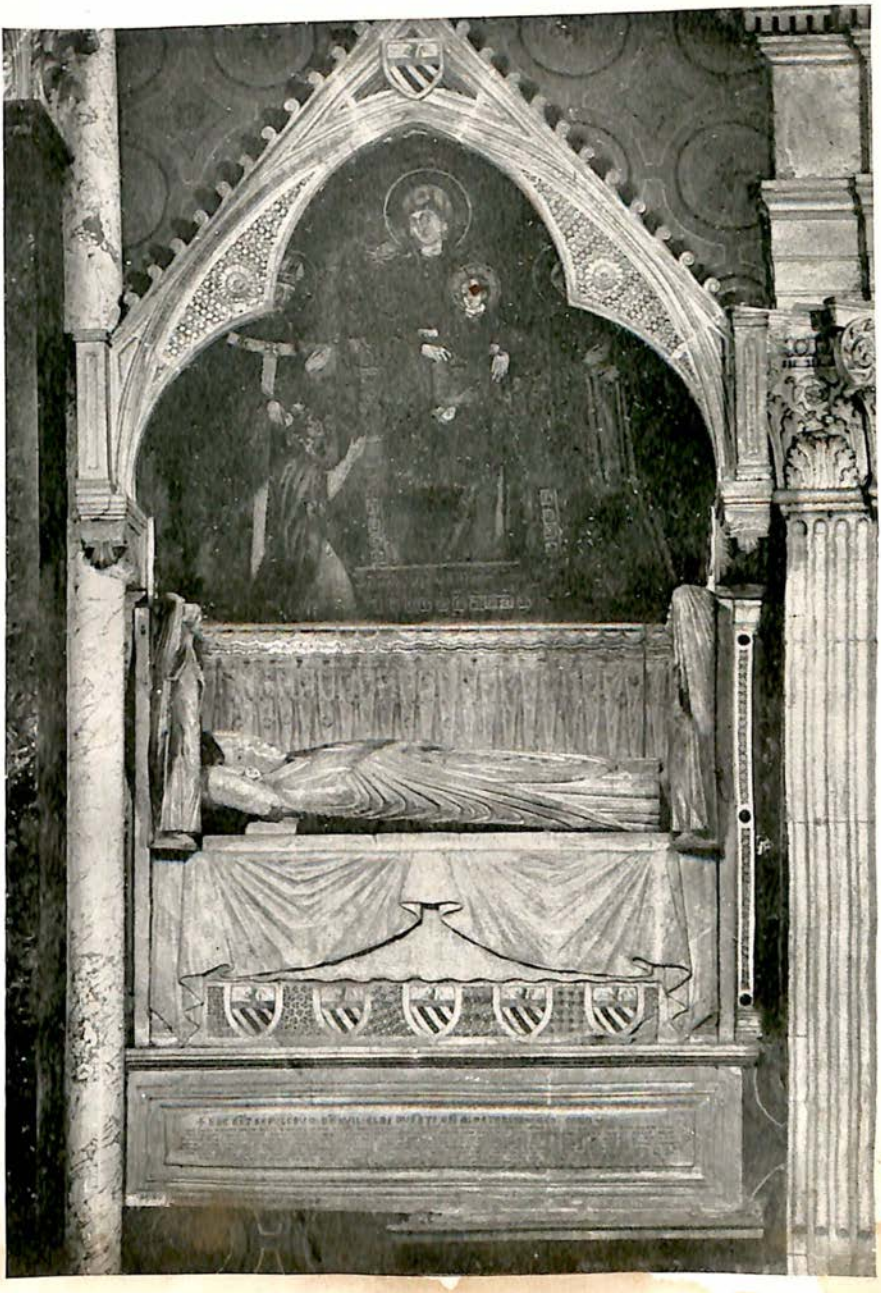
[2] Mentioned by Dante. In the Aracoeli is also a fine Cosmati tomb (of the Savelli) of about 1280.

put up in the churches of Palermo, Monreale, Cefalù, and other places; and these mosaics, though they doubtless owe much to Byzantine influence, show a power and originality of their own. At Venice too, although Byzantine influences were very strong and persistent, and were naturally strengthened by the Latin conquest of Constantinople (1204) and the consequent advent of many Byzantine artists and workmen, nevertheless we find in some of the mosaics of this period in St. Mark's and at Torcello a very distinct break with Byzantine tradition and a surprising display of animation and natural expression.

And in other parts of North Italy were to be seen soon afterwards unmistakable signs of the new-awakened life that was beginning to stir beneath the dust of centuries. Thus S. Frediano in Lucca has on its façade a (much restored) mosaic of about 1200 which is new in character, and in the Florentine S. Miniato we have a fine and certainly non-Byzantine mosaic of about 1280; and as a still earlier example (*c.* 1260) we may take the vault frescos in Parma Baptistery, which display a most wonderful vigour and vehemence—angels flying rapidly, Apostles and prophets hurrying as if each were trying to outrun the other.

Whence such new life originates it is never easy—it is perhaps impossible—to detect. Did it in this case, as some believe, come from beyond the Alps? Surely, what little we know of Northern art at this period makes us reject such a theory with something like ridicule. What shall we say, again, to the assertion that not only in the case of sculpture and poetry but also in that of mosaics and painting the new spirit came from the south—from Apulian or Sicilian sources? Perhaps it is wisest to listen unconvinced to such theories and to continue all the more zealously and lovingly our quest for what is great and beautiful, assured that often the search for the truth is of more importance than its supposed discovery.

(2) **Architecture.** In former chapters I have pointed out some of the characteristics of basilican, Byzantine, and Romanesque architecture. Here I shall add a few remarks on the origin and nature of Italian Gothic, the first important



59. Cosmati Tomb in S. Maria sopra Minerva, Rome

examples of which date from the early years of the thirteenth century.

Considerably earlier than the thirteenth century attempts were made in Italy to solve certain constructive difficulties by applying the device of the pointed arch and the ribbed vault. The pointed arch is found in Sicilian Norman and in Saracen architecture, and the genuine ribbed vault, which by many is regarded as the fundamental principle [1] of Gothic, may be seen, as well as Gothic-like shafts and pilasters shooting upwards from the piers as a roof-support, in the aisles and nave of S. Ambrogio at Milan, the date of which is said to be about 1050.

Whether the new principles originated in countries north of the Alps (possibly first adopted, as Ruskin believed, in order to meet the necessities of wooden buildings) and were introduced thence into Italy at this early age, or whether they were spontaneously generated in Italy itself and adapted to the exigencies of Italian architecture, is a question perhaps insoluble. It seems to me to be quite clear, though the distinction is not always clearly made, that there are at least two very distinct types of Italian Gothic—one a direct importation and the other a genuine Italian development of the principle of the broken arc as applied to vaulting and to colonnades and windows. As a striking example of the directly imported type I would cite S. Andrea at Vercelli, built (*c.* 1220) perhaps by an English architect and furnished with a dome, western towers, and buttresses, like a Northern Gothic church. Also a very interesting specimen of imported French Gothic is the little (much rebuilt) church of S. Maria della Spina at Pisa, founded in 1230. Of genuine Italian Gothic the finest early examples are probably S. Croce and S. Maria Novella and the Duomo at Florence; for the cathedral of Siena, the façade of which shows the transition from Romanesque to Gothic, is externally of a florid and decorative style that is

[1] The difficulty of vaulting *oblong* and other spaces where the altitudes of the arcs are different is solved by the use of a pointed arch, or rather of a broken arc, *i.e.* two similar curves placed at an angle less than the bend of a circle.

doubtless due to Northern influences; and the Duomo at Orvieto, which is of about the same date (*c.* 1290–1310) and is sometimes described as the finest example of Italian Gothic, is indeed a very magnificent building, but is, if I am not mistaken, scarcely more an example of genuine Italian Gothic architecture than is Milan Cathedral.

The essential differences between Northern and Italian Gothic may be intimated in a few words.

First let us note that the fundamental principle of Greek and Roman architecture, as exemplified in the colonnade and architrave (and also in the solid cupola of the Pantheon), is that of vertical pressure—a dead weight on a vertical support —while the principle underlying Gothic is *balance*.[1] By means of such balance enormous masses may be elevated and poised aloft, and, as we see in our Northern cathedrals, in order to support the thrust of such masses the walls, generally of no great thickness and weakened by the introduction of huge windows, have to be propped by means of mighty external buttresses, attached or flying. Now in Northern Gothic all such constructive devices, both external and internal, were made decorative, with pinnacles, crockets, traceries, gargoyles, etc., by which process the beauty of pure form was disfigured and at the same time true artistic decoration, such as mosaics and frescos, were rendered almost impossible, whereas the Italians, while adopting the pointed arch (or broken arc) and developing from it the most wonderfully proportioned forms of beauty (such as the interior of S. Croce and such as Giotto's Campanile, both of which are incomparable specimens of pure form), did not allow constructive devices to usurp the province of decoration. They kept the beauty of constructive form and the beauty of decorative art distinct. Thus one glory of Giotto's Campanile is its constructive form—as graceful as that of a lily—and another glory is its rich marbles and sculptures and delicate mouldings. Again, the perfect proportions of the bare and 'barn-like' interior of S. Croce, when illuminated by early-morning light, are, in spite of all the

[1] See remarks on Romanesque Architecture, p. 437.

60. S. Croce, Florence

disfiguring monuments, so lovely that (as Dante said of Casella's music) they quiet all the longings of one's soul; but that is not all that S. Croce offers us: if one steps into the Bardi or the Peruzzi chapel one finds oneself face to face with broad walls covered with Giotto's frescos—for which no Northern Gothic cathedral could easily find fitting surface.[1] Think of Giotto's frescos, here or at Assisi, and try to imagine them in Westminster Abbey!

The following list of some of the principal Italian Gothic churches and palaces may be useful. Gothic palaces form a very characteristic and impressive feature of many North Italian towns. They are mostly of later date than the early Gothic churches and are products of Italian genius far more than are some of the churches mentioned below. Venetian Gothic, it will be remembered, was also a late product and possesses a very special character, having been subjected to various influences, among which was doubtless the Oriental.

CHURCHES. At **Vercelli,** *S. Andrea* (begun *c.* 1220, perhaps by Brighintz, an Englishman?).

At **Assisi,** *S. Francesco* (*c.* 1228, by Jac. Tedesco of Meran? Also Upper Church, *c.* 1253, with Gothic portal, etc.).

At **Pisa,** *S. M. della Spina* (*c.* 1230, French Gothic), *Campo Santo* (*c.* 1270, by Giov. Pisano). Also *S. Caterina* and *S. Michele*, examples of 'Pisan-Gothic.'

At **Siena,** *Duomo* (begun *c.* 1210, cupola 1264, façade 1284–1320).

At **Orvieto,** *Duomo* (*c.* 1290–1310).

At **Bologna,** *S. Francesco* (*c.* 1250, with buttresses; horribly rebuilt), *S. Giovanni in Monte*, and *S. Petronio* (after the plan of Florentine Duomo).

At **Verona,** *S. Anastasia* (*c.* 1261).

At **Florence,** *S. Maria Novella* (begun 1278), *S. Croce* (begun 1294), *Duomo* (Arn. Cambio 1296–1301, Giotto 1334–6, Andrea Pisano 1336–49), *Campanile* (1334 onwards).

At **Rome** the only old Gothic church is *S. Maria sopra Minerva* (built *c.* 1285, probably by the builders of S. Maria Novella).

[1] One result of this love of *surface* is the greater breadth of the Italian Gothic arches, which makes a nave, such as that of the Florentine Duomo, look shorter than it is, whereas English and French Gothic naves, with their more pointed and numerous arches, give the impression of much greater length. And here let me once more note that, whatever claims to admiration it may possess, a Northern Gothic cathedral, held together by external buttresses, seems not to possess that *entirety* which is supposed to be essential to a work of art, for when one is inside the building these buttresses, without which the whole would collapse, are out of sight, so that an effort is necessary to assure oneself that they exist and to allay a feeling of anxiety. In Italian Gothic one has no such sensation.

At **Venice,** the church of the *Frari* (begun *c.* 1230, entirely rebuilt *c.* 1330–1400 ; simple and rather clumsy imitation of Northern style), *S. Giovanni e Paolo* and *S. Stefano* (1333–80 ? Much rebuilt ; also heavy and inelegant style).

PALACES. At **Siena,** (of about twenty-two palaces) *Palazzo pubblico* (1289–1305) and *Palazzo Buonsignori* (*c.* 1350).

At **Bologna,** *Palazzo Communale* (1290).

At **Florence,** *Palazzo Vecchio* (1298–1314).

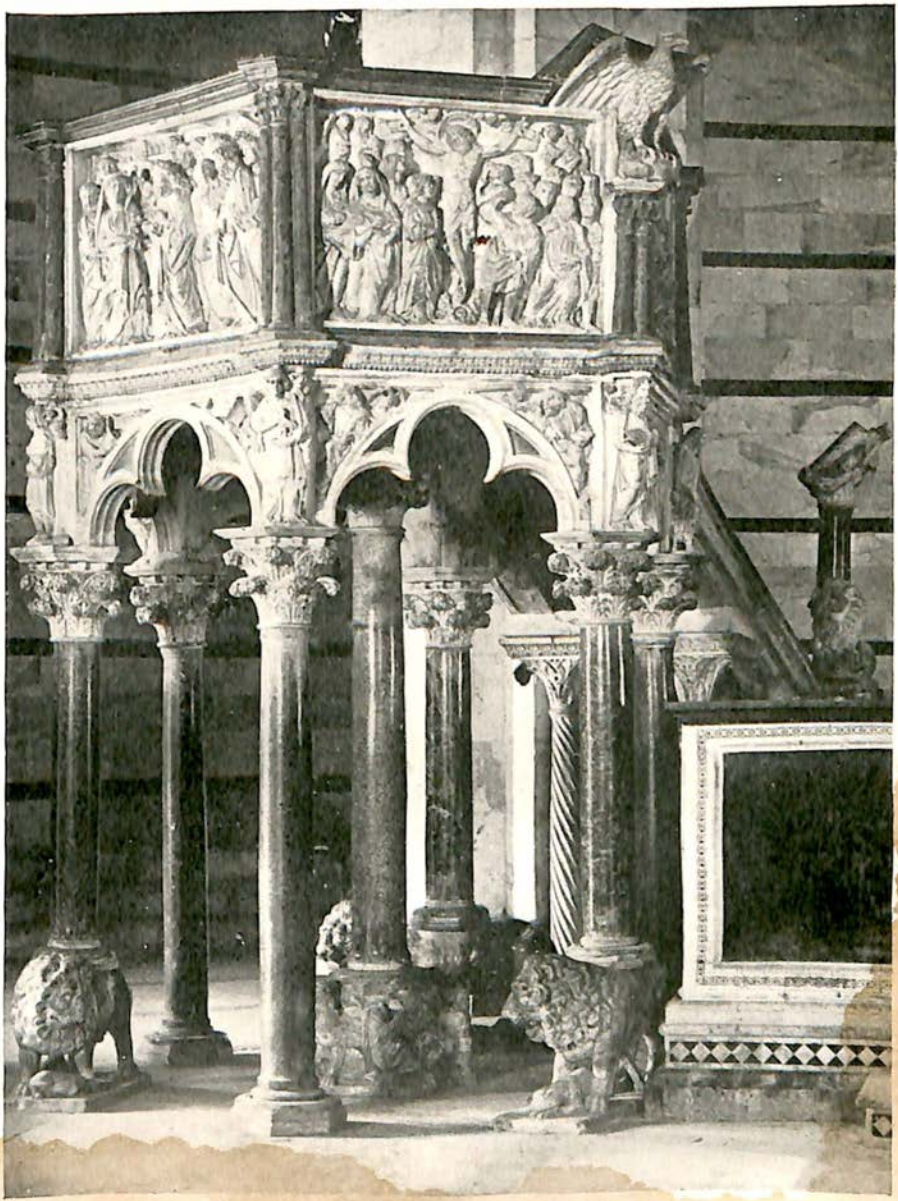
At **Pistoia,** *Palazzo Pretorio* (*c.* 1350).

At **Venice,** (of about a hundred) *Palazzo ducale* (1310 onwards), and many others (*Sangredo, Morosini, Cà d'oro,* etc.) of later date and genuine Venetian Gothic style, the exquisite beauty of which we all know.

(3) **Sculpture.** The most important fact connected with Italian art of the thirteenth century is perhaps the sudden appearance of a new sculpture, and the question whence it so suddenly appeared opens up a subject on which a great deal has been written, but very little proved. Also here I shall have to limit myself to a few general impressions.

The rude and often repulsively grotesque character of medieval Italian sculpture, especially where it came under Germanic influences, has been frequently indicated and illustrated in former chapters.

Some imagine that even before the thirteenth century they can detect symptoms of a revival, and it is indeed strange that with so many beautiful specimens of classic sculpture still extant and visible (such as sarcophagi, reliefs, etc.) this art should have become as totally extinct as that of painting ; but even if the Roman *scholae* did keep alive through the Dark Ages any glimmering spark of ancient genius, all traces of their influence seem at last to have perished, and in spite of all the praise that has been lately lavished on certain stone-carvers, such as Gruamons (*c.* 1170 ?) and Antelami (*c.* 1200) and the somewhat later Guido di Como and his son Guidetto, I think an inspection of their works at Lucca, Pistoia, Parma, and elsewhere will convince the unprejudiced that, although there may be some dignity in single figures (*e.g.* Antelami's *Ezekiel* and Guidetto's *Saint Martin* at Lucca), these productions belong to the same class, let us say, as the Monza lunette (p. 256) and that they stand at the end of an old order of things and not at the beginning of a new, being in no artistic



61. The Baptistery Pulpit, Pisa

sense predecessors of that famous Pisan pulpit whence, as an old writer says, issued forth, as from an Ark, the great sculptors of Tuscany. The reliefs on this hexagonal pulpit (for which see Fig. 61) offer the first truly artistic treatment of a Christian subject in sculpture, and the sudden, unheralded apparition of this work of noble design and classical technique at a time when in Italy—anyhow in North Italy—the sculptor's art was in a state of almost hopeless degeneracy is a startling fact. To stand before Niccolò's pulpit in the Pisan Baptistery after inspecting grotesque productions of his 'predecessors'—for instance, Bonanno's bronze doors in the south transept of the Duomo—excites a heart-throb such as I once experienced when, journeying oceanwards after long exile among wild tribes in Central Africa, I suddenly espied on the path a shard of porcelain—the fragment, perhaps, of a broken cup dropped by some Arab or European caravan.

The date of this work of Niccolò Pisano, who died *c.* 1278, is 1260. Some say that he was already well known as an architect and had been employed as such on the Duomo at Pisa and also at Siena. But there seems no satisfactory evidence of this, and it is likely that his pulpit first made him well known. The question is, where and how did he acquire his wondrous skill?

Vasari asserts that Nicola (Niccolò) served as apprentice to certain *scultori Greci* employed on the ornamentation of the Pisan Duomo and Baptistery and attained his skill by studying Greek sarcophagi and monuments which stood in or near these edifices or were built into their walls;[1] and that he especially studied and copied 'figures from the boar-hunt of Meleager' carved on a sarcophagus which had been 'placed by the Pisans in the façade of the Duomo and had been used as the tomb of the mother of Countess Matilda.' There is in the Campo Santo an old Roman sarcophagus with such a relief,

[1] The Campo Santo, though used as a cemetery from 1203, was first surrounded by its Gothic arcades by Giovanni Pisano, son of Niccolò, in 1270, and when Niccolò made his pulpit (1260) these sarcophagi and monuments, says Vasari, had not been placed in the arcades. Indeed the Beatrice sarcophagus was first moved thither in 1810.

but it shows no inscription such as that quoted by Vasari, nor is there anything in the pulpit suggested by this relief. However, another old sarcophagus (Fig. 31), half of whose relief shows Phaedra and Hippolytus and half the boar-hunt, has an inscription stating that it was the burial-place of Beatrice, Matilda's mother; and this displays figures from which Niccolò certainly drew inspiration. There is also a large and beautiful Greek vase of Parian marble, with a Bacchanalian procession which doubtless offered him various suggestions, especially for his High Priest. But his wonderful reliefs contain no direct imitation. Nevertheless, everyone who feels the indescribable grace and dignity of ancient sculpture must at once recognize the like spirit—not perhaps in artistic composition, which is such a wonderful characteristic of the best ancient reliefs, but in the beauty and truth and vigour of form and the nobility of expression. By some wonderful recreative power the divine, angelic, and sainted *personae* of the Christian hierarchy are presented to us—not, as sometimes in old mosaics, under the disguise of classic armour or apparel, but as veritable Greek deities, heroes, and heroines. The Madonna—evidently inspired by the Phaedra of the sarcophagus—has the regal brow and pose of Juno. Gabriel is like some new-lighted Mercury, the Magi reminding one of Minos or old King Priam. Even the horses of the Magi are Pheidian.

When one begins to think how it could be possible to achieve all this by a mere study of certain old carvings, one may be tempted to agree with writers who assert that every intelligent critic must smile at such an absurd suggestion. But there are possibilities in the sphere of human genius that are not dreamed of by such philosophers, and, ingenious as the following theory is, I think the enthusiasm that always attends the discovery of a mare's-nest may account for the favour with which in some quarters it has been received.

We are informed that Niccolò of Pisa (on the pulpit he is called 'Pisanus') was really an Apulian. An old document styles him 'Nicolaus Pietri de Apulia,' thus asserting rather

62. The Ravello Pulpit
Near Amalfi

ambiguously that either he or his father Peter came from the south, or perhaps got the sobriquet from having visited Apulia. One may be quite willing to accept any of these four possibilities; but when one is told that Niccolò acquired his wonderful skill as sculptor in South Italy, one naturally asks what proof there is that the art of sculpture in those regions and at that period was so far advanced as to admit of *this* possibility. One remembers Sicilian mosaics, and bronze doors, mostly traceable to Byzantine artists, and one or two fairly executed reliefs, and some interesting specimens of architecture—but nothing else except one single pulpit; and on this Ravello pulpit (Fig. 62) these writers seemingly base their theory that the *fons et origo* of Tuscan sculpture was Apulia.

There is certainly a certain resemblance between the Ravello and the Pisan pulpit, and the device of columns resting on lions indubitably shows Lombard influence in both cases. But there is nothing at Ravello (except some well-executed busts) that bears any resemblance to the Pisan sculptures—and surely these are the point of importance.

Now according to the inscription on this Ravello pulpit *Nicolaus de Fogia marmorarius hoc opus fecit*, and we are told that this was Niccolò, son of Bartolomeo of Foggia (a favourite residence of Frederick II), and that he was doubtless a relative of the Niccolò who migrated to North Italy and made the similar Pisan pulpit.

All this is, of course, possible; but I really think it more probable that our Niccolò was a native-born Pisan, and that the 'Pietri *de Apulia*' should be explained by supposing that his father visited and perhaps for a time resided in the south—Pisa at that time having been a great maritime power and in constant connexion with South Italian ports. And seeing that the date of the Ravello pulpit is most assuredly 1272, I think it reasonable to suppose that, if Niccolò had any connexion at all with it, he, or some pupil of his, may have been invited to Ravello—or to Naples, whither Giotto was invited later—and may have designed and perhaps

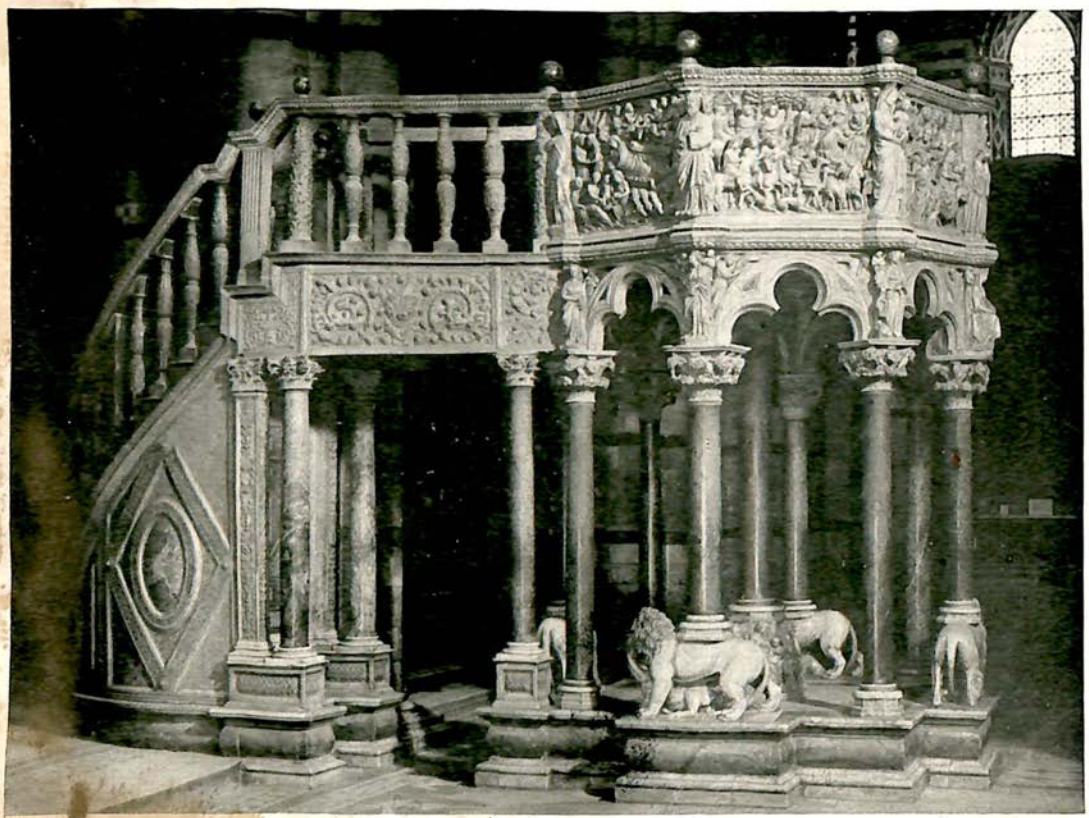
executed the work on somewhat the same lines as the Pisan pulpit.

However that may be, it is incontestable that Niccolò was the founder of that Tuscan school of great sculptors of whom Michelangelo was perhaps the greatest.

With his son Giovanni, Niccolò wrought also (1265–68) the beautiful Siena pulpit (Fig. 63) and the Deposition lunette over the door of the Duomo at Lucca, which Crowe and Cavalcaselle call the best bit of sculpture of the thirteenth century. Several other fine works are attributed to him or to Giovanni. (For the sculptures on Domenic's tomb see Fig. 52 and explanation.) A scholar of Giovanni's was Andrea Pisano (1273–1348), the fellow-worker of Giotto on the Campanile and the creator of one of the wonderful bronze doors of the Florentine Baptistery.

(4) **Painting.** It would in any case be beside my purpose to give biographical details that can be found in multitudinous books on the early Tuscan artists, and as the thousand years or so covered by this volume do not extend to the end of Giotto's life it will be better to defer our consideration of the origins of Italian painting until Giotto's work and its later developments can be traced. I shall therefore limit myself here to certain points connected with the question whether Florence was or was not the cradle of this new-born art of painting, taking it for granted that none would be so bold as to deny that Tuscany was its home.

The fact that the revival of the art of sculpture preceded the new birth of painting in Italy is, of course, due to the survival of ancient statues, sarcophagi, and other monuments and the non-survival of ancient paintings—except such as had not yet been excavated at Pompeii and elsewhere. And first let us decide whether we may speak of the new birth, or even the re-creation, of the art of painting in contradistinction to the revival, or resuscitation, of the art of sculpture. Are we to say that the life of all true pictorial art had become totally extinct? Are we to regard Byzantine painting as a gorgeous mummy, incapable of transmitting any vital spark



63. The Siena Pulpit

of life? Are we to scout the suggestion that Roman and Tuscan mosaics bridged the abyss of more than a thousand years and made it quite easy for, say, Cimabue to find his way across to the City Beautiful? May we affirm that genius is able to bridge all abysses for itself and needs no transmission of ethereal flame, but is capable of artistic creation in absolute independence of that law of natural evolution which forbids a break in continuity? Yes, I think we will dare to do so.

In Tuscany at the beginning of the thirteenth century the Byzantine style seems to have prevailed largely. As this Byzantine style was doubtless introduced into North Italy *via* Venice it may seem surprising that it did not prevail still more in Lombardy. But the fact is that in Lombardy at that period neither the Byzantine nor any other style prevailed, seeing that painting itself scarcely existed.[1] At Florence, on the contrary, the number of artists was so large that when Dante was young more than twenty *maestri*, it is said, had studios there—perhaps many of them in the old Via de' Pittori. And these were doubtless all 'Greeks,' or else Italians who had studied the technique and the traditions of the Byzantine school of painting—and what this technique and these traditions were we have already seen.

Among the apprentices of some such painter [2] was doubtless the youth Giovanni Cenni, known better under his adopted name Cimabue, who 'was born,' as Vasari truly says, 'to shed the first light on the art of painting'—or as we may

[1] As also in Germany. At an earlier period at Aachen Charles the Great put up mosaics stolen from Ravenna, and in his castle at Ingelheim, between Mainz and Bingen, there were great frescos representing such celebrities as Romulus, Alexander, Hannibal, Charles Martel, etc.; but all this has disappeared, and the relics of *c.* 1150–1250 only show coarsely outlined and coloured wall-paintings with evidences of Byzantine influence. (The famous tapestries of Quedlinburg, *c.* 1200, are a puzzling exception.) One may note in passing that for two centuries after 1200 (*i.e.* down to the days of the Van Eycks) German painting was very much hampered by the dominating influence of the Gothic principle of constructive decoration, which not only limited the artist to altar-pieces, but reduced his pictures to narrow fields, such as heavily framed triptychs.

[2] Vasari says that the young Cimabue watched 'Greek painters' at work in S. Maria Novella. But this church was founded in 1278, when Cimabue was thirty-eight years old!

perhaps say, to reanimate with life the mummy of Byzantine art.

This new light, or life, this wondrous quality that distinguishes even the early attempts of the new school from the pictures of the preceding 'Greek painters,' may be felt, if not described, by those who in a receptive, leisurely, and uncritical state of mind will, after inspecting a few Byzantine icons, spend, say, half an hour in the presence of the Rucellai Madonna.

The difference is not so obvious perhaps as it is when we compare the Pisan pulpit with Antelami's reliefs on the Baptistery at Parma, but it is, I think, as essential. It is the difference between what possesses life—anyhow, the potency of life—and what is lifeless.

The chief work of Cimabue was probably done in connexion with the celebrated frescos at Assisi, where Giotto at first worked under his direction; but of the elder master's work there little or nothing can be certainly recognized. Also of the numerous altar-pieces attributed to him by Vasari three only are extant. One is in the Louvre; the other two are at Florence, namely, that which he painted for the church of della Trinità and which hangs now in the Accademia side by side with a somewhat similar work by Giotto, and the beautiful and noble Rucellai Madonna, which was painted for, and is still to be seen within, S. Maria Novella.

Latter-day sceptics, mostly German, have denied that Cimabue painted any of these three pictures, and on the ground of some old document that mentions a commission offered (1285) by the monks of S. Maria Novella to the Sienese painter Duccio they insist that we shall believe Duccio to have painted this Madonna of the Cappella Rucellai. To argue the point is here impossible. I can only state my conviction. Duccio's vast 'Ancona' with its twenty-six scenes from the life of Christ, although it is wooden and vapid in execution, does certainly display the influence of the new style (of Giotto rather than of Cimabue) in regard to attempted animation and expression; but this 'Ancona,' as such an altar-

piece is called, was not painted till about 1311, and earlier paintings by this master, to be seen in the Siena Gallery, show scarcely a sign of liberation from the shackles of Byzantinism. That also at Siena there were towards the end of the thirteenth century some painters, such as Guido and Duccio, who were affected by the new movement cannot be doubted, but that on the strength of the evidence adduced we are to regard Siena, and not Florence, as the cradle of the new art of painting I think we may without hesitation permit ourselves to deny.

CHAPTER IV

ORIGINS OF ITALIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

TO ABOUT 1300

I. LANGUAGE

SOME have believed in a 'primitive Romance language' formed by the combination of a fairly pure Latin with Gothic and Lombard and spoken 'by all the peoples who were subject to Charlemagne throughout the south of Europe' (Raynouard). About the eleventh century this widespread primitive Romance, it is said, broke up, and the seven Romance languages originated by a natural process of differentiation. Further research has however shown that in Western and Southern Europe, and especially in Italy, the Northern invaders soon adopted the Latin forms both of thought and of speech that were prevalent throughout the Empire and ere very long gave up entirely their native tongue, which left but few traces.[1]

Now of Latin there were two distinct and ever more divergent varieties, namely the literary language and the conversational. The vigorous, conversational 'Roman'—that *sermo usualis, rusticus,* or *castrensis,* early evidences of which are supplied by the classical comic writers, and of which later many dialects existed in the provinces as well as in Italy itself—separated itself in course of time wholly from the old dead

[1] This seems true of the Goths, Vandals, and Franks, the relics of whose languages in Italy, Spain, and France are very inconspicuous. On the other hand, the Angles and Saxons imposed their language on Britain—till the coming of the Normans. By the way, the Normans themselves lost their original language (Danish) and adopted the Frankish Romance with wonderful rapidity. See p. 400 n.

or dying language—the literary, official, and ecclesiastical Latin —that Latin which was still used in its silver-age purity by Claudian, Boëthius, Cassiodorus, and a few other medieval writers, but which in documents, chronicles, hymns, letters, treatises, epitaphs, etc., of the ninth and tenth centuries we find to have become very degenerate.

It was, however, a long time before this *lingua popularis* became the sole spoken language. The degenerate classical Latin held its place for centuries—perhaps down to the twelfth or thirteenth century—side by side with the *volgare*, and was evidently 'understanded of the people.' This is proved by numbers of songs which were evidently meant for popular recital. Some of these songs are in quite correct Latin;[1] others contain a very considerable amount of very bad grammar, as exemplified in the following lines—the beginning of a soldiers' song, composed about 871, when the Emperor Louis II was taken prisoner (see p. 316 *n.*) by the Lombard Duke of Benevento:

Audite omnes fines terrae orrore cum tristitia
Quale scelus fuit factum Benevento civitas;
Lhuduicum comprenderunt sancto pio Augusto. . . .

On other occasions we have a queer medley of Latin and genuine Italian words and constructions, as in a letter[2] of Pope John XII (*c.* 963)—who, by the way, is said to have used nothing but the popular Roman in conversation.

Thus, side by side with degraded literary Latin but entirely distinct from it, was the popular *volgare*. This in time not only became the ordinary conversational language but also began to be used for ballads and love-songs (ladies, as Dante reminds us, often not understanding Latin), and ultimately was adopted

[1] *E.g.*:

O tu qui servas armis ista moenia,
Noli dormire, moneo, sed vigila!

sung (*c.* 924) by soldiers guarding Modena against the Hungarians.

[2] *Nos audivimus dicere quia [illegible] vultis alium papam facere. Si hoc facitis excommunico vos* da *deum omnipotentem.* It may be remembered that at the very Council which deposed John XII the Saxon speech of the Emperor Otto I was translated by Bishop Liudprand into *Latin* for the benefit of the audience (p. 336 *n.*).

by the writers of the new school of poetry and was raised by Dante to the rank of a great literary language.

Proofs of the early existence of this primitive Italian are rare, for in its first stages it was but rarely, if ever, written, and was not used in public inscriptions. The very first written specimens are said to be some testimonies of witnesses inserted in Latin legal documents of about the year 960, found at Capua and Teano. Of the same date is the recorded excuse of a learned Italian, Gonzon, who, when on a visit to the great monastery at St. Gallen, was ridiculed for committing a grammatical blunder: 'I allow,' he answered, 'that I am sometimes impeded by the use of our vulgar tongue, which is related to Latin.' Finally we find in old chronicles, from the ninth century onward, many genuinely Italian words and names, such as *guerra, rocca, favellare, cambiare, Capo-in-sacco, Rubacastello, Ubbriachi, Frangipani, Viva-che-vince*, etc., and by the twelfth century expressions such as *Papa vittore! San Pietro l'elegge!* and the popular cry of the Milanese at the election of an archbishop, *Ecco la stola!*

The tendency of a synthetic language towards decomposition induced conversational 'Roman'[1] to discard terminations, or to ignore their force and meaning, and therefore necessarily to adopt prepositions, auxiliary verbs, articles, and a more invariable arrangement of the sentence. Even in the Catacombs we find many examples of this, such as *salbo* (salvus), *unu* (unus), *locu* (locus), *homine* (hominem), *quae cum eum bene vixit, de via noba* (viae novae), and later we constantly come upon such jargon as *feminas qui natas fuerint*, or *occisus factum est.* At length all attempt to use case-endings ceased, an invariable form (generally the accusative docked of its final consonant) was adopted for the singular, the prepositions supplied the place of cases, and auxiliaries helped to form tenses.[2]

In this connexion it will be interesting to hear what Dante

[1] This tendency is perceptible also in old Latin inscriptions, and in antique forms preserved by Livy, Ennius, Lucretius, and others.

[2] Note the use of *avere* and *avoir* in *servir-ò* and *servir-ai* (also Spanish *comeré* = *hé de comer*).

thought about his mother language at the beginning of the fourteenth century. In his Latin treatise *De Vulgari Eloquio* he first indulges his imagination about the perfect speech of angels and of Adam. Then he laments the imperfections of all post-Babel languages, and gives their various groups. Of the Romance languages (*quae* oc *aut* oil *aut* sì *affirmando loquuntur*) he selects the Italian as the more venerable and noble.[1] But what, he asks, is Italian? Where shall we find an *idioma illustre, cardinale, aulicum,* fit for national literature? In order to discover this he examines the chief Italian dialects and lashes the ugly vulgarisms and the barbarous pronunciation of most of them, stigmatizing the Roman as the basest of all.[2] For three dialects he has a good word to say, and it is for us especially interesting that these are thirteenth-century Tuscan, Sicilian, and Bolognese, for they are the three forms of early Italian which will occupy most of our attention in the following section. From the various forms of Tuscan (Pisan, Sienese, Florentine, etc.) he gives examples of ugly words and expressions, but says that the capabilities of this vigorous *volgare* have been recognized and put to a good use by certain writers, among whom he mentions Guido Cavalcanti, Lapo Gianni, Cino of Pistoia, and 'one other'—evidently meaning himself.

Of the Sicilians and Apulians he says—what we shall find to agree with modern theories—that while the common people spoke a base and barbarous jargon (*turpiter barbarizant*) the poets used a more than usually refined and courtly language (*curialiora verba*) so that it had come about that all poetry written by Italians was called Sicilian (*ut quicquid poetantur Itali Sicilianum vocetur*).

The dialect of Bologna Dante calls 'perhaps the best,' and at this we need not wonder, for, as we shall see, there were already poets of the Bolognese school, one of whom

[1] In the *Convito* he calls Latin nobler than Italian as being 'more fixed and incorruptible,' but elsewhere he speaks of a living language as nobler than a dead.

[2] He calls it a *tristiloquium.* Of the Sardinians he contemptuously remarks that they imitate grammatical Latin like apes.

(Guido Guinicelli) Dante calls 'the father of myself and my betters.'

His final conclusion is that, 'as noble actions belong to Italy as a nation, so must the language be found in, and formed from, the whole of Italy.' It is, however, curious that probably among no other European people has the literary language been formed less from the whole country and so exclusively from the ordinary speech of one single district—indeed, one might almost say, from one single city.

II. The Origins of Italian Literature

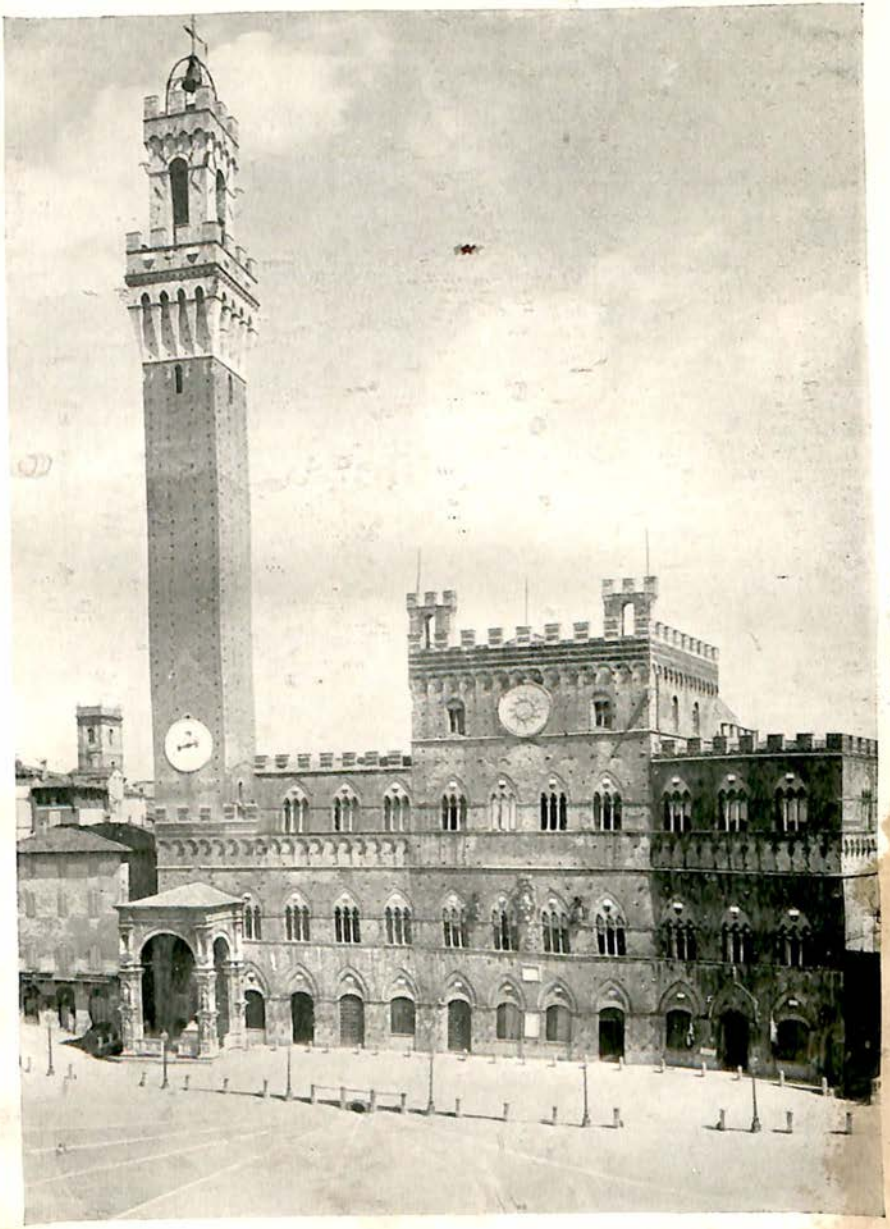
This is a subject on which to write a long treatise, wherein one might (as Dante says) squeeze out more fully the juice of one's opinions, would be a pleasant and comparatively easy task. But to try to put it all in a nutshell, so to speak, is a difficult and thankless undertaking.

Dante's great poem has already illuminated for us many a dull passage; but the influence of the *Divina Commedia* first began to work strongly after the epoch at which this volume ends, and it will be better to defer the great subject till we can examine it as a whole. Here I shall only attempt to trace from their diverse sources some of the rivulets which, like the mountain-rills that form the river of Tuscany—

Li ruscelletti, che de' verdi colli
Del Casentin discendon giuso in Arno,
Facendo i lor canali e freddi e molli—

gathered their waters together to form the fair, broad river of Tuscan and Italian literature.

We have already heard how Italian arose and gradually established itself in the place of Latin as the spoken language. We have now to hear how this vulgar tongue became the literary language of Italy. In order to put this briefly and distinctly I shall give a few significant facts under the following heads: (1) Native Italian literature; (2) The Provençal school; (3) The Sicilian poets; (4) Their influence in North Italy; (5) *Il dolce stil nuovo.*



64. Palazzo pubblico, Siena

(1) Although, as we shall see, the Provençal, and perhaps also the Sicilian, school of poetry influenced considerably the external form of early Italian poetry, the living power that vitalized this poetry, as well as the vigorous outgrowth of Italian prose, was drawn not from the amorous ditties of Troubadours and courtiers, but from native stock. Evidences of the existence of this native stock have become in the course of centuries difficult to discover, but there are some relics, and one of these, a Hymn of Praise by St. Francis, somewhat resembling the *Benedicite*, must excite both admiration and wonder. Indeed, so wonderful does it seem that this so-called *Cantico del Sole* should have been composed sixty years before Dante's *Vita Nuova* that some sceptical persons have declared that it must have been entirely rewritten in later times, if not translated (as were the *Fioretti* of St. Francis) from a Latin original.

This, however, is a baseless assumption unless we found it on the fact that, as often occurs when a composition is widely used for recitation, there are several slightly different versions. And even if the language has been modernized, it seems indubitable that a fine poem was written in Italian *volgare* in the year 1224.

The following extracts will show that this song uses a language which differs from that of Dante no more than Chaucer's differs from Shakespeare's :

Altissimo, omnipotente, bon Signore,
Tue son le laude, la gloria, e l'onore . . .
Laudato sie, mi signore, con tutte le tue
creature,
Specialmente messer lo frate sole . . .
Laudato sie, mi signore, per sora luna
e le stelle ;
In celu le hai formate clarite e pretiose
e belle.

Thanks are given for many other gifts, such as ' sister water,'

La quale e multo utile e humile e pretiosa
e casta,

and ' brother fire,' who is so *jocundo e robusto e forte*.

Very numerous 'praises' (*laude* or *lodi*) of like character and similar language, but with scarce a trace of poetry, were initiated by this Song of St. Francis and were carried through the whole of Italy by his disciples as well as by other wandering preachers; and the hysterical Flagellant movement of 1258 (see p. 509) called into existence thousands more. Some of the oldest and best of the many *laude* which have survived in Umbrian and Tuscan manuscripts, and which, like the hymns of certain modern religious bodies, often consist of a strange medley of *banalité*, pathos, and sublimity, are attributed to Jacopone of Todi, who by some is believed to have been the author of the *Stabat Mater*. His experiences are worth relating.

In 1278 he was converted from a careless life by the death of his wife, who was killed by the fall of a tribune at a festival and was found to be robed in sackcloth worn beneath her festal finery. He forthwith gave up all his wealth and courted destitution and despite, assuming the guise of an idiot, and when refused admission into the Franciscan Order he explained the motives of his *pazzia* in a strangely beautiful 'mystic song,' which begins thus:

Udite nova pazzia
Che mi vien' in fantasia:
Viemmi voglia esser morto
Perchè io son visso a torto . . .

and he goes on to say, in language wondrously modern, that he has given up Plato and Aristotle, for the simple-minded can reach heaven without philosophy:

Semplice e puro intelletto
Se ne va tutto schietto,
Sale a divinal cospetto
Senza lor filosofia.

After admission as Franciscan he took zealous action as reformer. He wrote hotly on this subject to Celestine (that hermit-Pope who 'made the great refusal'), and naturally came into violent collision with Boniface VIII, whom he lampooned and by whom he was imprisoned in a subterranean dungeon for four years.

Another striking evidence of the existence of native Italian verse before the *Vita Nuova* is the *Tesoretto*, an allegorical *Vision* in 2940 jingling verses, not unlike the *Vision* of Piers Plowman, by Ser Brunetto Latini, for whom Dante, his pupil, had evidently considerable respect and affection, although on account of certain failings he felt obliged to doom him to the fiery plain of the *Inferno*. The *Tesoretto* was written, according to Boccaccio, before 1260. In this year Brunetto seems to have been forced by the Guelf defeat at Montaperti to take refuge in Paris, where he wrote a more pretentious work, *Le Trésor*, in the French language.

But it was not only verse that was written in the early Italian *volgare*. Many translations were made from French and from Latin—versions of Northern and classical legends. Aesop's Fables were *volgarizzate*. Brunetto's *Trésor* was translated. Moreover chronicles, moral treatises, etc., began to appear in the vulgar tongue, and what were probably the first Italian romances now (*c.* 1260–90) saw the light. Of these the *Conti d'antichi cavalieri* and the *Cento Novelle*, which seem to preherald Boccaccio's *Decameron*, are the most notable. By the time that Dante was *nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita* Italian translations and histories were becoming fairly plentiful. As may be remembered, Giovanni Villani conceived the design of his great work when he was at Rome during the Jubilee of 1300.

(2) In the case of genius—such genius as that of Homer, or Shakespeare, or Dante—although it is interesting to note the effect of external influences on external form, it is of course for the most part profitless to attempt the discovery of 'sources.' Dante's sublimity of imagination, his 'love of love and hate of hate,' his tenderness and his fierceness, were all his own; but some of his rugged forms were doubtless due to the native ore on which he put his mighty stamp, while some of the gracious beauty of his 'sweet new style' was, we may feel sure, borrowed from Provençal and Sicilian song, which he inspired with a nobility and dignity that will be sought in vain in the often rather abject ditties of French

Troubadours or the *Canzoni* and sonnets of Sicilian court poets.

Any long digression into the realm of the Troubadours and Trouvères of France—a realm, be it noted, much older than that of early Italian literature—is here uncalled for. It will suffice to note that the cult of *Dieu et ma dame* with its amorous ecstasies of *la Joie*, that produced such choirs of knightly and princely bards, was first awakened by the Oriental Crusades, while on the other hand Provençal song was almost entirely silenced by the hideous atrocities of the Crusade against the Albigenses.[1] Even before this catastrophe (1210) Provençal bards had found their way to North Italy,[2] but now they seem to have come in great numbers, and, as was natural, sang more of war and revenge than of chivalry, indulging in satirical and political *Sirventes* more than in love-lorn ballads; and similar vigorous strains, both in the Provençal tongue and in *volgare*, were taken up by Italian singers, who were inspired by their own wars and feuds. Among these early Italian-Provençal bards was Sordello, who has been immortalized by Dante's verse (shall we add Browning's ?) rather than by his own.[3]

(3) But we must also consider another school of poets which doubtless influenced (how much or how little it is very difficult to say) the early singers of North Italy. Provençal bards, as we have seen, had already been introduced by Frederick Barbarossa into the imperial and princely courts of Italy, so that it was but natural that Barbarossa's grandson, Frederick II, that 'Wonder of the World' who patronized all kinds of learning and art and was addicted to Oriental voluptuousness and amorous dalliance, should encourage

[1] It seems strange that the last of the real Provençal Troubadours was apparently the notorious Folquet, who became Bishop of Toulouse and abetted Simon de Montfort in his extirpation of the Albigenses.

[2] Frederick Barbarossa may have first introduced them. We hear of such French court-bards in Italy down to about 1360.

[3] None who have read it can ever forget Dante's description of Sordello, *guardando a guisa di leon, quando si posa*—nor much else in the three cantos filled by his personality. Some doubt whether Dante's Sordello was the Troubadour or the *Podestà* of Mantua. Perhaps he was both.

65. Siena Cathedral.

Provençal songsters at his Sicilian court. Indeed, Frederick himself tried his hand at *Canzoni*, and so did his unfortunate son Enzio, and his unfortunate secretary, Piero delle Vigne, and his chancellor, the Notary Lentini.[1]

These Sicilian Troubadours made no use of that Sicilian dialect which Dante calls a base and barbarous jargon, nor were they influenced in the least by the Arabian tendencies of Frederick's court. They adopted a conventional 'poetic' language, in which Provençalisms and Latinisms were mingled with a kind of refined Italian *volgare*. This literary language of the Sicilian court (*lingua cortegiana*) has an amazingly close resemblance to the language used by early Tuscan poets, and it is a most interesting and puzzling question how we are to account for this resemblance. As the Sicilian school[2] died out with the Hohenstaufen dynasty, is it possible that these Sicilian *Canzoni* and sonnets were originally in a mixture of Sicilian and Provençal and were Tuscanized in order to be introduced into Northern Italy?[3] Or were Tuscan writers invited to Frederick's court, and did they bring with them their Tuscan poetical dialect? Or did the early Tuscan poets accept this Sicilian poetry as their model and adopt this Sicilian *lingua cortegiana* as their language, and was therefore Sicily the native home of that *dolce stil nuovo* and that *lingua Toscana* which are the glory of early Italian literature? If the last supposition is right, then Italy owes her greatest literature to the semi-Oriental Sicilian court of a German Emperor—a fact that would be still more startling than the Apulian origin of the great Tuscan school of sculpture.

(4) However that may be, it seems certain that the Sicilian school did to some extent affect North Italy. We have already

[1] Frederick II is credited with at least two extant *Canzoni* (*De la mia dezianza . . .* and *Dolze mio drudo . . .*), Enzio with a couple, Piero delle Vigne with about eight and a sonnet (*Però ch' Amore non si può vedere*).

[2] As Frederick held court much in Apulia these bards doubtless flourished also there, and there is a good deal of Apulian verse extant, but of uncertain date.

[3] Sometimes the rimes in the extant version of Sicilian poetry are imperfect unless the words are restored to the Sicilian dialect. A strophe by Enzio exists in pure Sicilian, though his other poems are quite Tuscan-like.

seen how in this part of Italy there existed from early days a vigorous native literature, and how the advent of Provençal bards occasioned a great deal of imitative Provençal poetry and also influenced the writers of Italian prose and verse. We now, about 1260—that is, ten years after the death of Frederick II and not long before the death of Manfred and the overthrow of the Hohenstaufen dynasty by Charles of Anjou—find Tuscan poets who are professedly followers of the Sicilian school.

Of these poets one of the first was Guittone of Arezzo, a member of the Order of *Frati Godenti* (Jovial Friars). In later years he abandoned the erotic Sicilian mode and took up more serious subjects. His disciple, Guido Guincelli of Bologna, also wrote at first in the Sicilian style, but afterwards affected poetry of a mystic and symbolic character with a tendency towards Platonic idealism and intellectual profundity. It was doubtless his later poetry which caused Dante to call him, when he met him in Purgatory, 'the father of me and of my betters who have ever practised the sweet and gracious rimes of love.'

(5) But a new race of poets was now to arise. This Provençal and Sicilian verse, though it showed some vigour in its satirical and political *Sirventes*, and though its form and its music were often exquisite, was on the whole very empty and wearisome, and its attitude towards woman was almost contemptible. In the healthier atmosphere of North Italy 'chivalrous love,' as Symonds says, 'was treated in a more masculine way and with far more intellectual depth of meaning.' In order to realize this fully one has only to read a few ditties of these Provençal or Sicilian rimesters, or a few effusions of some of their Italian imitators, and then turn to the sonnets and *Canzoni* of Dante's *Vita Nuova*.

The younger Italian poets, who had begun to cast off the trammels of a false style, poured much contempt on the old-fashioned imitators of the Sicilian mode. Here are some verses, possibly by Davanzati, a follower of Guittone's later style, addressed to some plagiarist of this genus, whom he

accuses of decking himself out in the gay feathers of the Notary Giacomo da Lentini, Frederick's chancellor :

Per te lo dico, nuovo canzonero,
Che ti vesti le penne del Notaro,
E va' furando lo detto stranero :
Siccom' gli uccelli la corniglia spogliaro
Spogliere' ti per falso menzonero,
Se fosse vivo, Giacomo Notaro.

Nor did the older verse-writers fail to respond—as we see from the contemptuous reception by some of his contemporaries of Dante's first sonnet.

It was round Dante that the younger poets grouped themselves. Among these we should note [1] especially Guido Cavalcanti and that Lapo Gianni who is mentioned in Dante's early sonnet beginning with the words :

Guido, vorrei che tu e Lapo ed io . . .

Guido Cavalcanti is well known to all who have read the *Inferno*, for there is no more pathetic episode in that poem than where Dante meets in hell the father of his great friend ; and this friend was also doubtless that Guido who in another well-known passage is said by Dante [2] to have ' taken from the other Guido [Guincelli] the glory of the Italian tongue ' :

Così ha tolto l'uno all' altro Guido
La gloria della lingua . . .

' And perhaps,' adds Dante, with a consciousness of his own supreme power, ' he is already born who shall chase both the one and the other from his nest ' :

e forse è nato,
Chi l'uno e l'altro caccierà di nido.

A touching confession of this supremacy (not the less touching because put into the speaker's mouth by Dante

[1] One should also mention Cino of Pistoia, the Ghibelline mourner of the death of Henry VII and the writer of some very beautiful sonnets in a style afterwards brought to exquisite perfection by Petrarca. But Cino, although a contemporary and friend of Dante, stood somewhat apart and did not accept fully the new school.

[2] *Purg.* xi (the passage in which Giotto is said to have outrivalled Cimabue).

himself) is given by a poet of Lucca called Buonagiunta, whom Dante meets in Purgatory. This Buonagiunta, a writer of the earlier school, speaks with admiration and wonder of one of Dante's *Canzoni*, and when Dante thus explains the new inspiration :

> One am I who, whenever
> Love doth inspire me, note, and in that measure
> Which he dictates within me singing go,

he answers :

> O brother, now I see the knot which held
> Me and the Notary and Fra Guittone
> Back from the sweet new style which now I hear.

The explanation of the mystery which Dante offers is that his poetry is dictated by love. A like answer might perhaps have been given by any Provençal singer. But how totally different is Dante's conception of love from that of Troubadours and Sicilian rimesters, or even from that of Petrarca himself! This difference is intimated by the last words of his *Vita Nuova*, which tell us of his determination to write of his Lady Beatrice 'that which hath never yet been sung by any man.' And the record of his great sorrow is closed by the prayer that his spirit 'might go hence to behold the glory of its Lady, who gloriously gazeth on the face of Him who is through all ages blessed.'

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